

Pay Policy Statement – West Oxfordshire District Council 2025/2026

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1. Background

1.1. The purpose of this Pay Policy Statement is to meet the following requirements:

- s38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 which requires the Council to approve a Pay Policy Statement annually prior to the commencement of the financial year;
- the Council's obligations under the associated statutory guidance set out in the Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act (February 2012) together with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

2. Scope of the Statement

2.1. To avoid confusion and provide transparency this statement will only apply to officers that are employees of West Oxfordshire District Council.

2.2. On the 1st November 2024, 66 employees transferred to West Oxfordshire District Council from Publica Group (Support) Ltd.

2.3. Details of pay for staff employed by Publica are found within Publica's statement of accounts.

2.4. The current Statement sets out the following elements:

- pay for each of the in scope officers
- remuneration of lowest paid officer
- the pay relationship between the highest paid officers and other officers
- performance related pay and bonuses, termination payments, transparency
- other aspects of remuneration.

3. Officers covered by the policy statement

3.1. Below is a list of those officers covered by the Statement:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Director of Finance Services (s151 officer)
- Director of Governance and Regulatory Services (Monitoring Officer)
- Director of Place Services
- Head of Services
- Other officers of the Council.

3.2. Those not covered by this statement include officers who are wholly or primarily employed by Publica and who retain dual employment contracts to deliver statutory elements of their roles such as, Parking Appeal decisions or delegated Environmental Health decisions that require an employment relationship with the Council. In addition, Officers mainly hosted by the Council e.g. South East England Councils (SEEC) are not included.

4. General Statements

- 4.1. The Council has a range of Human Resources policies that apply equally to all officers across the Council from the highest paid to the lowest paid. These policies cover a wide range of Human Resources issues including annual leave arrangements and sickness arrangements.
- 4.2. The Council determined that directly employed staff should adopt similar policies as the Publica employees in the interests of fairness and equity.
- 4.3. Subsequent to Publica merging its multiple pay and grading structures in 2020 and adopting a new comprehensive job evaluation scheme to ensure equal pay compliance, the Council has adopted a scheme built on similar principles in line with the previous Council resolutions.
- 4.4. The new Pay and Grading structure was designed in consultation with the Trade Unions and seeks to provide flexibility for the Council to adapt to changes in pay pressures and market conditions whilst retaining equal pay protection. The scheme also provides for local pay increases in addition to the national (cost of living) pay award in a similar way to incremental pay in the current scheme.
- 4.5. Following the conclusion of the staff consultation process, the new pay structure was implemented in June 2022 (backpay to 1st April 2021). This new pay structure does not cover statutory roles which remain subject to the previous benchmark approach as agreed by the Council.

5. Policy on Remuneration

- 5.1 The policy for the year 2025/2026 in respect of statutory officers is to maintain the level of pay in the same bands as the current year following the move to Chief Officer Terms and Conditions effective 1st November 2024, subject to any cost of living award that may be agreed nationally in relation to year 2025/2026.

Statutory Officers (Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Government Chief Officers – JNC)

Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) - £115,825

Director of Finance Services (s 151 officer) - £98,400

Director of Governance and Regulatory Services (Monitoring Officer) – £98,400

Non-Statutory Officers

- 5.2. In respect of other senior pay the revised scheme was implemented in June 2022 (pay back dated to 1st April 2021). This will also be subject to the national pay award in respect of 1 April 2025.
- 5.3. The pay and grading scheme is made up of four levels based upon the nature of the role (Core, Implement, Guide & Translate) with each level sub divided into generic job groups (Business Manager, Level 1 Manager, Level 4 Specialist, Level 3 Specialist, Level 2 Specialist, Level 1 Specialist, Level 2 Case/Field Work, Level 1 Case/Field Work, Customer Advisor, Process & Internal Support) and specific comparable pay peer groups.

The pay levels are as follows: -

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Core	£24,441 - £39,008
Implement	£29,476 - £53,213
Guide	£44,032 - £66,048
Translate	£55,655 - £83,482

- 5.4. At the time of publication of this policy statement no annual pay award has been agreed for 2025/2026. These pay levels will be automatically upgraded by the agreed pay award.
- 5.5. Other factors relating to pay:
- Officers are generally placed upon the bottom pay point on appointment, but this can be varied by the approval of the appropriate appointments panel.
 - A local pay award (pay levelling) can be made annually to allow progression within job groups typically to the mid-point.
 - Pay levels above the Job Group mid-point need to be supported by special factors such as market conditions/market forces.
 - No performance related pay exists for any Officer of the Council.
 - No bonuses are available for any Officer of the Council.
 - Termination benefits payable will be in line with that available to all other officers as set out in the Restructuring/Redundancy/Efficiency Policy guidelines in line with Employment Rights Act tables.
 - Full Council will retain the decision to make any new appointment of an officer where the pay (incorporating all payments and benefits in kind) exceeds £100,000.
 - Full Council will retain the decision to approve any severance payments where the compensation payments exceed £100,000.
- 5.5 The details of the payments in respect of all these officers are set out in the [Transparency page](#) of the Councils website.
- 5.6 None of the Statutory Officers are entitled to receive overtime payments for time worked beyond the contracted hours and out of ordinary working hours.
- 5.7 The Returning Officer for election purposes also receives a payment for the statutory duties undertaken by virtue of the specific, additional appointment to that role in addition to other responsibilities. For national elections and referenda the amount is set and is payable by the government. For District and Town/Parish Council elections, the fees are payable by the District Council in accordance with an approved scale.

6. Tax avoidance

- 6.1. The Council does not and will not employ senior managers in permanent positions via service companies that could be construed as avoiding tax and national insurance contributions. From time to time, the Council may employ individuals via service companies to cover interim or short-term project roles. However, the Council will comply with its responsibilities regarding the application of HMRC regulations on payments made to personal service companies (known as IR35) by applying income tax and national insurance deductions to the payment.

7. Market forces supplement

- 7.1. Evidence from market and recruitment data shows that for some professions a higher salary may be necessary to attract and retain staff. For non-statutory roles this is built into the pay & grading scheme utilising the in-built flexibility above mid-point.

8. Retention payment scheme

- 8.1. A retention payment scheme is available to all areas of the Council, and might be used in the following cases:
- Difficulty in recruiting the most suitable candidate for a post.
 - Difficulty in retaining key people where their leaving would significantly affect internal and/or external service delivery.

8.2 All additional payments will be time limited and reviewed at predetermined intervals to reconsider their appropriateness against the prevailing job market.

8.3 The scheme may be applied flexibly and can mean:

- Paying someone at a higher salary level
- Making a one off payment.

8.4 These can be used in combination with other benefits that the Council offers. A package to suit the particular circumstances should be used and no individual should receive benefits that equate to more than 15% above the maximum of their substantive grade.

9. Lowest paid employees

9.1. Lowest paid employees of the Council are defined as those employees (excluding Apprentices) who are in a full time or part time role, who are above the age of 21, and are paid within the Core category of the new Job Evaluation scheme (the lowest band). From 1st April 2024 the lowest Core Grade was £24,441. This amount is subject to pay award pending in respect of April 2025.

9.2 The pay differential between the highest paid officer and the median officer is set out below:

Highest	£115,825
Median Employee	£40,133
Multiple	2.89

10. Pay protection

10.1. The Council seeks to ensure that all employees receive equal pay for work of equal value. To be consistent with equal pay principles the Council's protection arrangements will not create the potential for pay inequalities (e.g. open-ended protection).

10.2. There may be times when the grade for an individual's role changes for reasons unrelated to their performance e.g. restructures. In such cases the protection arrangements outlined will apply for 3 years from the date of the change.

11. Severance payments

11.1. The Council has a consistent method of calculating severance payments which it applies to all employees without differentiation. The payment is intended to recompense employees for the loss of their livelihood and provide financial support whilst they seek alternative employment.

11.2. In line with the statutory redundancy payment scheme, the Council calculates redundancy severance payments using the following calculation. The calculation is based on an employee's age and length of continuous local government service (please note that employees must have a minimum of 2 years' continuous service to qualify for a redundancy payment) the multiplier for the number of weeks is then applied to the employee's actual weekly earnings.

11.3. The amount of redundancy pay will be calculated as follows:

- 0.5 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is less than 22 years of age;
- 1 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 22 years of age or above, but less than 41 years of age;
- 1.5 weeks' pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 41+ years of age.

11.4 The maximum number of service years taken into account is 20. The maximum number of weeks' pay is 30 for anyone aged 61 years of age or older with 20 years or more service

11.5 Your weekly pay is the average you earned per week over the 12 weeks before the day you got your redundancy notice.

12. Honorarium payments

12.1. Payment of honoraria is a method by which the Council may reward an employee who has temporarily undertaken the duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post, or to recognise a specific contribution that an employee has made to the Council.

13. The Real Living Wage

13.1. The Council and Publica are committed to paying the Real Living Wage (RLW). The RLW rate from October 2024 is:

- £12.60 per hour across UK (except London - £13.85) for workers 18 years and older.

13.2 The RLW is voluntary and is independently calculated based on what people need to get by. The Government encourages all employers that can afford to do so to ensure their employees earn a wage that meets the costs of living, not just the government minimum.

13.3 For Council employees whose substantive post is less than the RLW they will automatically receive the rate set out in 13.1 above.

14. Other pay and conditions in operation

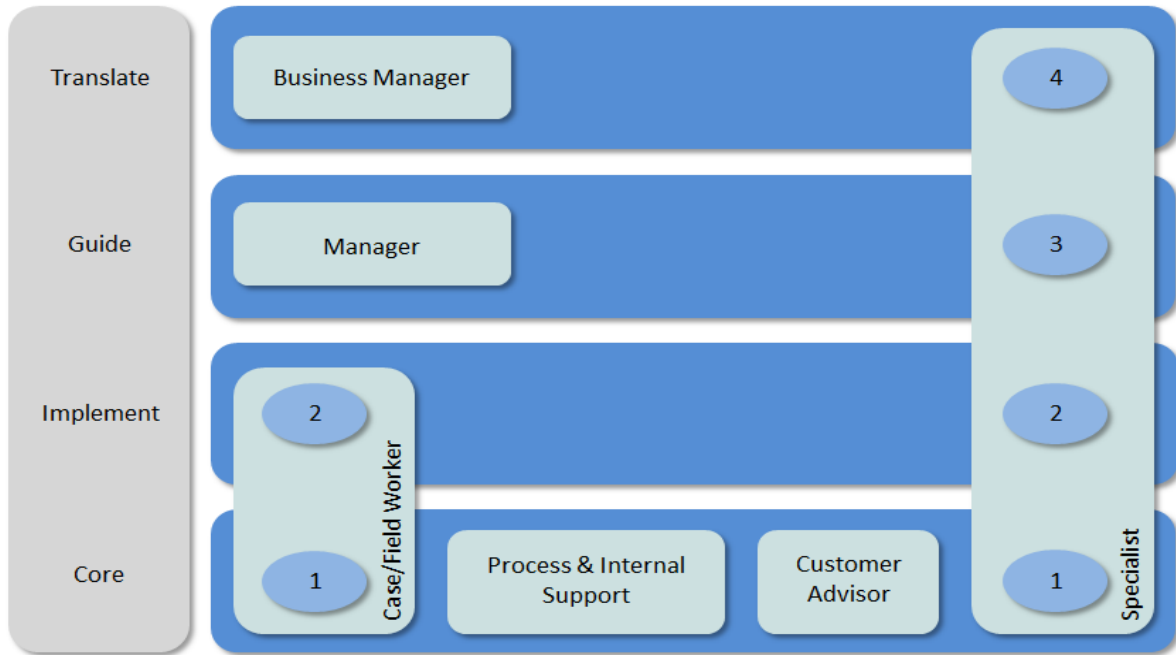
- Stand by and call out payments
- Long service award

15. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

15.1. The LGPS provides for the exercise of discretion that allow retirement benefits to be enhanced. The Council will consider each case on its merits but has determined that it does not normally enhance pension benefits for any of its employees, nor does it operate any discretions under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (injury Allowances) Regulations 2011.

15.2. Further information regarding the Oxfordshire County Council administering body for the Council is available from the [Oxfordshire County Council](#) website.

Appendix I Evaluate Pay & Grading Framework – Non- Statutory Roles



Job Groups	From (£) *	Mid-Point (£) *	Top (£) *
Business Manager/Head of Service	£55,655	£69,568	£83,482
Level 4 Specialist	£55,655	£69,568	£83,482
Manager	£44,032	£55,040	£66,048
Level 3 Specialist	£44,032	£55,040	£66,048
Level 2 Specialist	£35,476	£44,344	£53,213
Level 2 Case/Field Worker	£29,476	£36,845	£44,214
Level 1 Specialist	£26,005	£32,506	£39,008
Level 1 Case/Field Worker	£24,441	£29,056	£34,868
Customer Advisor	£24,441	£28,588	£34,306
Process/Internal support	£24,441	£28,588	£34,306

Please note: not all job groups will be utilised due to the structure of the Council