



Employment Committee 15th November 2023

Report Title	Pay Award 2023/24
Report Author	Marie Devlin-Hogg Assistant Director of Human Resources

Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1974	

List of Appendices

None.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek agreement to apply the national local government pay award (NJC for LGS) to NNC staff on TUPE protected local terms and conditions.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council has a range of pay and terms and conditions for its employees as a result of local government reorganisation. Staff who transferred to North Northamptonshire Council on 1st April 2021 transferred on the terms and conditions of their predecessor authorities.
- 2.2 Employees who transferred on nationally agreed pay and terms and conditions, and those appointed to NNC since 1 April 2021 have a contractual entitlement to receive a pay uplift following national pay agreements. However, those on local terms and conditions will not automatically receive a pay award.
- 2.3 The 2023-24 pay award for local government services (NJC for LGS) has now been agreed nationally. Pending agreement from the Employment Committee to apply the National pay award to staff on local terms, the preference would be to pay this before Christmas, ideally in the November pay-run but no later than the December pay-run. In order to achieve this, the increase would need to be applied to the payroll system immediately. The Committee is therefore

asked to approve the payment of this award to employees on local terms and conditions.

- 2.4 In October 2022, the Employment Committee agreed to apply the 2022-23 national pay award to employees on local terms and conditions. This was well received by employees. In order to continue striving to be an employer of choice, remain competitive and ensure fairness across the organisation, it is proposed that all employees receive the 2023-24 pay award as outlined in the recommendations.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Employment Committee:

- a) Approves the application of the 2023-24 National Pay Agreements which will uplift the pay bands for North Northamptonshire Council employees on local terms and conditions to the same value as the respective national pay award noted in 4.3 of the report.

- 3.2 Reasons for the recommendations –

- a) Following local government reorganisation, employees were transferred under TUPE from predecessor authorities to North Northamptonshire Council on the pay, terms and conditions applicable to them on 31st March 2021. Whilst the majority of our workforce (employees on NNC interim terms plus those who TUPE transferred from the D&B's) are on nationally agreed pay, terms and conditions, c. 23% full time equivalent employees are subject to local terms and conditions and do not therefore automatically receive a pay award.
- b) The pay award supports the Council's aim to attract and retain staff, recognising their ongoing hard work and contribution in the delivery of council services.
- c) The decision supports the Council's corporate aim to be an employer of choice and a 'one team' approach.

- 3.3 Alternative options considered

The Council could only pay employees who are contractually entitled to the pay uplift, however the impact on morale across the organisation and the Council's ability to recruit and retain talent, would likely be hampered by this decision. This decision would not be aligned to the Corporate Plan, which was agreed by full Council.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 When North Northamptonshire Council came into being on 1st April 2021, all predecessor authorities were signed up to national pay, terms and conditions, with the exception of Northamptonshire County Council, which had decided that pay and terms and conditions would be determined locally.
- 4.2 Where local authorities recognise national agreements, pay is determined by a negotiating body; the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services. The NJC is made up of representatives from trade unions and the employers. Historically, the NJC will seek to agree a pay award to increase local government pay each year. Negotiations for the April 23 pay award have been ongoing and an agreement by two of the three trade unions (Unison and GMB) was reached on 1 November 2023. Up to 2020, every NJC pay deal was reached with the agreement of all three unions. But since 2021 pay deals have been reached with just UNISON and GMB. For a third consecutive year, Unite has refused to have its details included in the 2023 NJC pay agreement circular.
- 4.3 The agreed pay award 2023/24: NJC for Local Government Services ('Green Book') includes:
- an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay spine pay points (NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive). This represents a percentage increase of between 9.42% (NJC pay point 2) and 3.88% (NJC pay point 43);
 - an increase of 3.88% on locally determined NJC pay points that extend the NJC pay spine;
 - an increase of 3.88% on NJC allowances – this impacts 'sleeping in' payments for our workforce.
- 4.4 Within Local Government, there isn't a single set of nationally agreed pay, terms and conditions, there are several, dependent on job role. The majority of North Northamptonshire Council employees are "Green Book" employees. The terms and conditions that North Northamptonshire Council recognise include.
- a) The National Joint Council for Local Government Services ("Green Book").
 - b) The Soulbury Committee ("Blue Book") for posts such as Educational Psychologists and School Improvement professionals.
 - c) The Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives for the Chief Executive.
 - d) The Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities for all other Chief Officers.

- e) The Secretary of State via the National School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Burgundy Book) for the teachers employed by the Authority.

4.5 Apprentice rates are also updated each April in accordance with National Apprenticeship Guidance.

Issues and Choices

4.6 Upon transition to North Northamptonshire Council, employees were transferred under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 "TUPE" to North Northamptonshire Council on the pay, terms and conditions that they were subject to at their previous authorities. North Northamptonshire Council employees are therefore working on different pay, terms and conditions, depending on which authority they transferred from. Employees who transferred from the District and Borough councils have a contractual entitlement to receive the nationally agreed pay awards.

4.7 In addition, prior to unitary, North Northamptonshire Council agreed to apply national agreements on pay reached through the national joint negotiating machinery for any employees appointed after 1 April 2021, which provides greater stability to its workforce and is also attractive to potential talent wanting to join the organisation. The Council considers this to be a key element of its recruitment and retention strategy.

4.8 The Council has committed to being an employer of choice and recognises the importance of ensuring fairness across the organisation. It is therefore proposed that those employees who are subject to local terms and conditions receive the same pay award as their colleagues who benefit from national pay agreements. This will ensure that the Council does not have a two-tier workforce and that all employees are treated in an equal way.

4.9 Whilst the alternative option is to only pay employees who are contractually entitled to the pay uplift, the impact on the organisation and the Council's ability to recruit and retain talent would be greatly hampered by this decision. Such a decision would not accord with the Council Corporate Plan, which was agreed by Full Council.

4.10 Budget has been built into the 2023/24 MTFP in anticipation of the position being agreed nationally.

5 Implications (including financial implications)

5.1 Resources and Financial

5.1.1 The overall cost to implement the pay award for employees across all funds is £7.706m. This will be funded through existing budgets and use of contingency.

5.2 Legal and Governance

5.2.1 Full Council has delegated authority to the Employment Committee via the Constitution to agree to implement any pay awards for those employees on local terms and conditions.

5.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

5.3.1 The Council is committed, within its Corporate Plan 2021-2025 to invest in and value its staff to become an employer of choice.

5.4 Risk

5.4.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report. However, it should be noted that there are tight timescales to ensure that payment can be made before Christmas 2023.

5.5 Consultation

5.5.1 The Council continues to hold regular meetings with recognised Trade Unions.

5.6 Equality Implications

5.6.1 By ensuring those employees who are subject to local terms and conditions receive the same pay award as their colleagues who benefit from national pay agreements, this will ensure that the Council does not have a two-tier workforce and that all employees are treated in an equal way.

5.7 Climate Impact

5.7.1 Not applicable

5.8 Community Impact

5.8.1 Not applicable

5.9 Crime and Disorder Impact

5.9.1 Not applicable

6 Background Papers

6.1.1 [North Northamptonshire Council - Corporate Plan 2021-2025](#)