

Meeting:	COUNCIL
Date:	4 March 2021
Title:	Annual Review – Council’s Pay Policy
Purpose:	Adopt the Council’s Pay Policy for 2021 / 22
Author:	Dilwyn Williams – Chief Executive
Chair of the Chief Officer Appointment Committee:	Councillor Dafydd Meurig

BACKGROUND

1. Since 2012 there is a statutory responsibility on all Councils to adopt a pay policy on an annual basis. This statutory requirement notes that the responsibility for approving a pay policy rests with the full Council.
2. When adopting the pay policy for 2012/13, the full Council resolved to ask the Chief Officers’ Appointments Committee to conduct an annual review of the pay policy’s future sustainability and to submit recommendations to a meeting of the full Council in March each year.
3. Subsequently, and in accordance with the arrangements adopted since then, members of the Chief Officers’ Appointments Committee were asked in it’s meeting on the 11th of February to consider the content of the draft policy for 2021/22 and submit a recommendation to the meeting of the full Council on the 4th of March.

CHIEF OFFICERS

4. Last year, the Committee were informed that there is a danger that chief officer salaries in Gwynedd are falling behind other authorities in the region, and that this presented a possible risk to us in recruiting and retaining staff. Subsequently, the Committee asked the Chief Executive to conduct a review of chief officer salaries and a report was presented to us at the meeting on the 11th of February.
5. The Chief Executive presented an analysis of the market for local government leadership roles at the regional level. It was explained that it would now be more appropriate to conduct the analysis within the regional context, rather than undertaking an assessment on the basis of the jobs market at the UK level, as has been the case in the past.
6. Having considered the report, the Committee accepted that chief officer salaries within the Council do need to be reviewed. However as there is a possibility that pay for some areas of the public sector is to be frozen, it was agreed that the matter should be deferred until all of the Council’s staff receive a pay increase. It was therefore decided that the Committee should revisit and consider the contents of the report as soon as possible at that stage.
7. There was a separate discussion about the role of Monitoring Officer. The Committee was informed that the salary for the role within Gwynedd is not competitive when comparing with jobs that undertake that responsibility in other regional local authorities, and that this presented an unacceptable risk to the effective operation of the Council. The Committee concluded that

there should be swift action and that the salary for the role should increase to a maximum of circa £70,000, effective immediately.

8. Separately to the above report, it should be noted that each chief officer has the contractual right to the pay increases that are agreed upon by the National Joint Council for Chief Officers. These are contractual terms that each employer must implement. With this in mind, the Pay Policy states that “**Chief Officers employed under JNC terms and conditions are contractually entitled to any national JNC determined pay rises and this Council will therefore pay these as and when determined in accordance with current contractual requirements**”. This means that Council approves those pay rises as a result of annually adopting the pay policy. For the year 2020/21 this increase was 2.75%.
9. As suggested in paragraph 6 above, in November 2020 the UK government announced a temporary pay freeze on some sections of the public sector. The impact of this announcement on local government is unclear, but it could influence the discussions on any possible increase in due course. We are aware that those discussions will commence shortly, and the situation will therefore become clearer over the forthcoming weeks and months.
10. Apart from the amendment referred to in paragraph 7 above, there is no further change to the pay policy adopted by the Council for 2020/21.

POSTS BELOW CHIEF OFFICER LEVEL

11. Staff working in roles below those of Chief Officer level also have the contractual right to pay increases that are agreed upon by the National Joint Council for Local Government Workforce. The pay increase for 2020/21 was 2.75%.
12. The announcement on pay restrictions within some areas of the public sector could also be relevant to our wider workforce for the forthcoming year. The UK wide discussions on a possible increase are yet to begin, but it is will become apparent soon what impact the announcement will have on that process.
13. If there is to be a pay increase in 2021/22, then the Council will implement that decision as soon as possible after any announcement.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That the Council approves the Chief Officers’ Appointment Committee’s recommendation to adopt the 2021 / 22 Pay Policy, including the decision as set out in paragraph 7.

Views of the statutory officers

Monitoring Officer:

The Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on the Council to adopt an annual Pay Policy which meets the requirements in the Act. This is a decision of the Full Council. I am satisfied that the Policy recommended for adoption by the Chief Officers Appointments Committee meets the statutory requirements.

Head of Finance:

Resources to finance the implications of the Pay Policy presented here are provided for in the Budget for 2021/22, which is another agenda item at this Council meeting.