

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026 / 2027

1. Background

- 1.1 The pay policy statement outlines the remuneration arrangements within the Council and aims to ensure that pay rates are both competitive within the market, reflect the need to recruit and retain key skills and appropriately reward employees for their contribution to the Council's achievements.
- 1.2 The Council has an agreed pay policy and grading structure in place and all posts within the Council are subject to job evaluation to determine the appropriate level of pay and grading.
- 1.3 With that in mind, the Council has agreed to use the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services nationally negotiated pay rates for all but its management grades. The management grading structure and pay rates are locally agreed and to ensure these are set at an appropriate level an independent review has been undertaken. The Council to date has commissioned Korn Ferry for this purpose and the current recommendation is that these pay rates be based at the 'median' within the Public/Not for Profit Sector for the South East of England.
- 1.4 The Council has agreed that, employees will receive a rate of pay at the voluntary Living Wage where the substantive grade for the post falls below that level. This is paid as a Living Wage Supplement and calculated as the difference between the current salary and the current voluntary living wage. The Council's practice is to review the implementation of the annual uplift payment as provided by the Living Wage Foundation each year.
- 1.5 In accordance with the nationally negotiated pay award as at 1 April 2025 for employees who come within the NJC for Local Government Services terms and conditions of employment, the Council has removed spinal column point 2 from its pay and grading structure with effect from 1 April 2026.
- 1.6 An Improvement Plan has been developed and agreed which sets out the framework to transform the Council's operations, with a continued emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness and operating as a cost-conscious organisation that meets the needs of the Borough while living within its means. A key outcome will be to positively align the workforce and overarching organisational structure to meet the needs of the Council.

- 1.7 The redesign of services and staffing structures is supported by an Equality Analysis in accordance with normal practice. Where there is the need for an Equal Pay Audit to be undertaken, this will take place at the appropriate time.
- 1.8 An external review of senior management pay takes place every four years to enable the Council to set the parameters by which its staff should be remunerated. The last review took place in 2021 and therefore the next review was due in 2025. However, in light of the new corporate structure that came into effect from 1 April 2025, this has been postponed and will be reconsidered in 2026/2027 to enable the new structure to continue to embed alongside the implementation of the proposed organisational restructures.
- 1.9 This document sets out Bedford Borough Council's Pay Policy for 2026/2027 and governs aspects of pay and in particular the remuneration of its senior employees (chief officers) and its lowest paid employees. It does not apply to school based employees.

2. Strategic Aims

The Council's Pay Policy has three strategic aims:

- To recruit and retain high quality employees with the skills necessary to deliver the Council's priorities.
- To ensure that senior remuneration packages are tightly constrained in the current financial climate, that remuneration packages remain affordable and sustainable and that value for money is secured.
- To continue to work towards making sure that pay is fair and non-discriminatory.

3. Definition of a 'Senior Employee' for the purpose of the statement

- the head of the authority's paid service designated under section 4(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
- monitoring officer (the officer responsible for legal matters) designated under section 5(1) of that Act;
- statutory chief officer under section 2(6) of that Act;
- a non-statutory chief officer under section 2(7) of that Act;
- deputy chief officer mentioned in section 2(8) of that Act.

4. Definition of 'Lowest-Paid Employees for the purposes of the statement

- employees who fall within the lowest pay grade in use by the Council.

The Council has in place a harmonised pay and grading structure that is applicable to all posts within the authority. Terms and conditions of employment have also been harmonised across the Council and therefore by using the lowest pay grade within the Council, any comparisons made and relationships to this can be easily identified and understood.

5. Remuneration for Senior Employees falling within the definition at Section 3.

5.1 Salary Band

The remuneration figures are correct at the time of being presented to General Purposes Committee, however these will be subject to review as part of the annual national pay award.

Post	Salary Band
Chief Executive	£187,517 - £208,118
Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Environment	£136,346 - £166,045
Executive Director of Adult Services	£120,904 - £144,662
Executive Director of Children, Education & Families	£120,904 - £144,662
Executive Director of Public Health	£120,904 - £144,662
Executive Director of Resources	£120,904 - £144,662
Service Director for Governance	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director for Adult Social Care, Front Door, Safeguarding, Care Standards and Monitoring	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director for Integration and Collaboration, Support Services (Finance), Adult Social Care & Regulated (In House) Services	£88,497 - £107,694

Post	Salary Band
Service Director for Children's Services	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director for Education, SEND & Schools	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director for Public Realm, Highways & Waste Management	£98,332 - £119,717
Service Director for Regulation, Housing & Customer Contact	£98,332 - £119,717
Deputy Director of Public Health	£88,497 - £107,694
Consultant in Public Health (Health Protection and Healthcare)	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director for Finance	£88,497 - £107,694
Service Director Bedfordshire Pension Fund	£88,497 - £107,694
Head of Regeneration, Property & Local Economy	£80,617 - £92,392
Head of Legal	£80,617 - £92,392
Chief Officer for Practice Standards, Strategy & Quality	£80,617 - £92,392
Head of Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Older People & Contact Team	£80,617 - £92,392
Head of Care Standards Monitoring & Safeguarding	£80,617 - £92,392
Chief Officer for Commercial Services & Business Transformation	£88,497 - £107,694
Head of Strategic Programmes	£80,617 - £92,392
Head of Audit, Risk & Insurance	£80,617 - £92,392

Post	Salary Band
Chief Digital, Data & Technology Officer	£80,617 - £92,392
Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	£80,617 - £92,392
ICB Place Lead	£80,515 - £90,839
Manager for Communications, Communities & Chief Executives Office	£64,868 - £72,562

*Salaries as at 1 April 2025

- 5.1.1 Senior Employees and ultimately the Chief Executive as the head of paid service are highly accountable to the public for the provision of quality value for money services to a diverse community. High levels of performance are therefore expected from all employees at all times.
- 5.1.2 For Senior Employees, incremental progression will not be automatic but will be subject to the annual appraisal of performance against agreed service and corporate objectives in accordance with the Council's senior management performance measurement regime.
- 5.2 Bonuses Payable
- The Council will not make a payment in the form of a bonus.
- 5.3 Charges, Fees or Allowances Payable
- 5.3.1 The Chief Executive has been appointed as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Council appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Council, the role of Returning Officer involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from their duties as an employee of the Council. Additional fees are paid for Returning Officer duties which are not part of the post holder's substantive role. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role. The fees are set by Central Government for General Elections and other national polls, with a local rate applying to local elections.
- 5.3.2 Allowances are as attached at Appendix 1.

5.4 Benefits in Kind

5.4.1 Access to the Council's Assisted Car Purchase Scheme where the employee is a designated car user, ie: the job requires the employee to use their own vehicle for business purposes. In these circumstances, the employee is eligible to apply for a loan from the Council in order to purchase a car.

5.4.2 Approved salary sacrifice schemes:

- child care vouchers (for employees who joined the scheme before it closed on 4th October 2018)
- cycle to work
- shared cost AVC
- purchasing additional annual leave

5.5 Increase in or enhancement to pension entitlement where the increase or enhancement is as a result of a resolution of the authority

In accordance with the Council's discretions policy in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, no increase or enhancement will be applied to pension entitlement.

5.6 Payments by the Council to a Senior Employee on ceasing to hold office under or be employed by the authority, other than amounts that may be payable by virtue of any enactment.

Where the reason for leaving is redundancy/early retirement, payments will be in accordance with the Council's redundancy/early retirement severance policy which sets out that the Council:

- will not exercise its discretion under the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme 2013 Regulations (as amended) to enhance the number of weeks' compensation in relation to severance payments.
- will exercise its discretion under the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme 2013 Regulations (as amended) in that severance payments will be calculated using an employee's actual weekly pay.
- will calculate the number of weeks compensation in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996 (the Statutory Scheme) which provides for up to a maximum of 30 weeks.
- will release pension for this purpose in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

6. Remuneration for the Lowest Paid Employees, falling within the definition at Section 4.

6.1 Salary Band

Salary Band	Comments
£24,796	This excludes Level 2 and 3 apprentices who are paid in accordance with the Council's agreed policy.

6.1.1 This salary represents 5.1% of the Council's workforce (excluding apprentices).

6.2 Bonuses Payable

The Council will not make a payment in the form of a bonus.

6.3 Allowances Payable

As attached at Appendix 2.

6.4 Benefits in Kind

As that set out for Senior Employees.

6.5 Increase in or enhancement of the employee's pension entitlement where the increase or enhancement is as a result of a resolution of the authority

As that set out for Senior Employees.

6.6 Payments by the Council to the employee on ceasing to be employed by the authority, other than any amounts that may be payable by virtue of any enactment.

As that set out for Senior Employees.

7. Pay Relationship

- 7.1 The Council will measure and track pay relationships to ensure its pay policy is fair, non discriminatory and remains fit for purpose. To this end, the pay relationship between the Council's Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Council's median earner has been measured.
- 7.2 For the period 2026/2027, the ratio of pay of the Chief Executive to that of the median earner is 6.1: 1
- 7.3 For the period 2026/2027, the ratio of pay of the Chief Executive to that of the mean average salary is 5.1: 1
- 7.4 Under the regulations contained in the Equality Act 2010, the Council has produced a gender pay gap report which is published separate to the Pay Policy.

8. The remuneration of Senior Employees on recruitment

- 8.1 Senior employees would normally be appointed at the minimum of the grade. However, the Chief Executive or in the case of the appointment of the Chief Executive, the Council does have the discretion to appoint at another point within the grade.
- 8.2 It is not permitted to appoint above the top of the grade.
- 8.3 A valid reason for offering more than the normal starting salary must be demonstrated and evidence provided that it will not generate inequality within the work group.
- 8.4 Where a new appointment is made and the salary or the grade of the post is above £100,000 the approval of Council will be required.

9. Increases and additions to remuneration for each Senior Employee

- 9.1 Pay increases will be in accordance with the incremental progression criteria as set out at paragraph 5.1.2 and/or in accordance with any cost of living increase negotiated nationally by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executives and Chief Officers.
- 9.2 Any additions to remuneration will be in accordance with the Council's locally agreed policies, for example
 - i) Honorarium and Acting Up Payments
An honorarium payment may be considered where an employee undertakes significant additional duties outside the scope of the job description for an extended period of time or an acting up payment may be considered where an employee undertakes the work of a higher graded post.

- ii) Market Rate Supplements (MRS).
Used in response to problems experienced in recruiting and retaining certain roles and attempts to bridge the gap between salary levels and market rate pay. In order to establish whether a MRS is required, an independent survey will be undertaken to gather the market data which will then determine whether a MRS is needed and if so, the level of the payment.
- iii) Accelerated Increments.
Progression within the grade beyond the standard incremental review process can be considered for recruitment and retention purposes in accordance with set criteria. By doing this, it could avoid the need to consider or apply an MRS and the costs that can be associated with this. In addition, it could avoid unnecessary recruitment spend.

10. The use of Performance Related Pay

Performance Related Pay will not be used for Senior Employees.

11. The Council's policies for the financial year relating to the other terms and conditions applying to Senior Employees.

11.1 Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions applying to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Service Directors and Heads of Service are those set out in the JNC for Local Authority Chief Executives and Chief Officers.

11.2 Collective Agreements

In addition, Senior Employees are subject to:

- i) the collective agreement in relation to the harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment.

11.3 Flexible Retirement

11.3.1 The Council has exercised its discretion under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations to provide flexible retirement to scheme members. A scheme member who has attained the age of 55 and who, with the Council's consent, reduces their hours of work or grade, may make a general request in writing to the Council to receive all or part of their pension benefits and the Council may pay those benefits even though the employee has not retired from that employment.

11.3.2 In accordance with the Council's flexible retirement policy, the reduction in hours or grade should be by at least 40% and the employee's new pay plus pension must not be more than they received prior to flexible retirement.

11.3.3 Flexible retirement provides a facility for the Council to retain the expertise of employees who may otherwise retire fully; assist the transfer of skills and knowledge from those employees to other workers and facilitate reorganisation. For the employee, it provides the opportunity to phase into retirement.

12. The Council's approach to final payments to Senior Employees when they leave the authority

In accordance with the Council's redundancy/early retirement severance policy, in exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to cases of early retirement in the efficient interest of the service. In these circumstances, the provision to pay up to 30 weeks payment at actual weekly pay may be applied.

13. Re-employment of staff in receipt of a severance payment

Where an employee is in receipt of a severance payment, the post they were employed in will no longer exist in the Council's structure. Employees can be re-employed in an alternative post at a later date provided that it is not normally earlier than 12 months from the last date of employment with the Council unless there is a specific business critical reason approved by the Chief Executive to lift this provision eg: difficulties in recruiting to hard to fill posts.

14. Re-employment of staff in receipt of a pension from the Local Government Pension Scheme

The Council will not normally re-employ senior employees at a comparable grade who are in receipt of a local government pension, ie: Officers who come within Grade 14 and above. However, where there is a business critical reason for example difficulties in recruiting to hard to fill posts, approval can be granted by the Chief Executive to lift this provision. An employee can be re-employed on a contract for service via a third party provider to undertake a one off piece of short term consultancy where it is in the interest of the Council to use an external consultant. The contract for service will not normally commence earlier than 12 months from the last date of employment with the Council unless there is a specific business critical reason approved by the Chief Executive.

15. Review

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 the Council will prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. The next statement which will be for 2027/2028 will be submitted to a meeting of full Council for approval by 31 March 2027.

Should it become necessary to amend the 2026/2027 Pay Policy Statement during the year, the appropriate changes will be considered by full Council.

16. Publishing the Pay Policy

The pay policy statement for 2026/2027 has been approved at the meeting of full Council on 18 March 2026. The policy is available to view on the Council's website at www.bedford.gov.uk

ALLOWANCES PAYABLE

The following sets out the Council's allowances for Senior Employees in accordance with the Collective Agreement with its recognised trade unions to harmonise terms and conditions of employment as a result of Unitary Status.

1. First Aid Allowance – where appointed as a First Aider

A voluntary duty where a small annual payment is made.

2. Fire Warden Allowance – where appointed as a Fire Warden

A voluntary duty where a small annual payment is made.

3. Mileage Payments

Employees who use their car for business purposes are able to claim for the business miles travelled. These are paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage rate of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p thereafter.

ALLOWANCES PAYABLE

The following sets out the Council's allowances in accordance with the Collective Agreement with its recognised trade unions to harmonise terms and conditions of employment as a result of Unitary Status.

1. Overtime /Additional Hours

Monday – Saturday	Time and a half
Sunday and Public and Extra Statutory Holidays	Double time

Employees in receipt of basic pay above spinal column point 22 will have these rates capped at spinal column point 22.

2. Work on Public / Ex-Statutory Holidays – as part of the normal working week

In addition to normal pay, employees will be paid at plain time for all hours worked within their normal working hours. Time off in lieu shall also be allowed at a later date.

Employees in receipt of basic pay above spinal column point 22 will have these rates capped at spinal column point 22.

3. Night Work

Employees who work at night as part of their normal working week are entitled to receive an enhancement of time and one third for all hours worked between 8.00pm and 6.00am.

4. Standby / Call Out Payments

To cover emergency situations.

Employees in receipt of basic pay above spinal column point 22 will have these rates capped at spinal column point 22.

5. First Aid Allowance – where appointed as a First Aider

A voluntary duty where a small annual payment is made.

6. Fire Warden Allowance – where appointed as a Fire Warden

A voluntary duty where a small annual payment is made.

7. Sleep In / Waking Nights

An allowance paid to employees who are required to sleep in at various residential establishments.

8. School Crossing Patrol Time

Small payment made for walking from home to the school twice per day as employees are not required in between those sessions.

9. Tool Allowance

A small allowance payable to trade posts such as carpenters who are required to purchase their own tools.

10. Mileage Payments

Employees who use their car for business purposes are able to claim for the business miles travelled. These are paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage rate of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p thereafter.