



Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Decision Report

Report reference number: 014-24

Government security classification: Not protectively marked

Title of report: Brigade Managers Pay Award

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Gold Book Officers (Brigade Managers)

Report by: CFO Rick Hylton / Pippa Brent Isherwood (Monitoring Officer)

Date of report: 1st March 2024

Enquiries to: Pippa Brent Isherwood (Monitoring Officer)

1. Purpose of the report

To present to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner the case for a pay award for Uniformed Principal Officers, who fall outside of the NJC Grey and Green Book pay awards.

2. Recommendations

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is asked to approve a pay award of 3% to Gold Book Brigade Managers, which is aligned to the Authority's budget assumptions for 2024/25 and the NJC Brigade Managers pay award of 25th January 2024 (attached at Appendix 1). The pay of all Brigade Managers covered by the NJC for Brigade Managers should be increased by 3% on basic pay with immediate effect and backdated to 1 January 2024.

3. Benefits of the proposal

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner will be seen to value the staff concerned and to demonstrate a commitment to treating all staff in a fair and appropriate manner. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service will be viewed as an employer of choice for

future managers and leaders and will continue to ensure senior roles are competitively remunerated within the fire and rescue sector and wider public sector.

4. Background and proposal

The majority of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service employees are contracted on terms and conditions relating to either the Grey Book (for uniformed staff from Firefighters to Area Managers) or the Green Book (for professional support staff). Pay awards for each of these are determined through national negotiation and pay bargaining through the National Joint Council for either grey or green book staff respectively.

The following Gold Book roles fall outside of these terms and conditions and these terms and conditions, including pay, are set by the employer (in this case the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire Authority):

Chief Fire Officer
Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Director of Operations)

The NJC for Brigade Managers has reached agreement on a 3% increase on basic pay for Brigade Managers backdated to 1 January 2024. Whilst these posts are employed under terms and conditions having due regard for the national terms and conditions of the Gold Book, they are set by the employer (the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire Authority) and therefore, consistent with previous years, any pay award is to be determined by the employer.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

The following alternative options are available to the employer for these posts:

1. Maintain current levels of pay. This would mean that the three gold book posts would maintain their current salary levels. This would, because of inflation, mean that they would suffer a real terms reduction in salary. Pay awards for other staff are yet to be determined and pay awards to other staff groups will further erode the pay differential between Brigade Managers and other senior managers, potentially making recruitment and retention of these roles more difficult.
2. The Authority could opt to award a pay award determined locally. This could see the Authority offer a pay award greater than 3%, and potentially aligned to that which may be received by other staff groups, or it could determine to offer an award less than the 3% NJC award. An award of more than 3% would exceed the Authority's current budget assumptions, while an award of less than 3% may – similar to option 1 above – make recruitment and retention of these roles more challenging going forward.

6. Strategic priorities

We have committed to the promotion of a positive culture in the workplace and to make the best use of our resources. Both commitments could be seen to be impacted without agreement to and implementation of this award.

7. Operational implications

None immediately, however staff retention may be affected in the medium to long term if the proposal is not agreed.

8. Financial implications

The Authority has budgeted within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for a 3% pay award for all staff, and therefore this cost is currently budgeted for. If the alternative option 1 was chosen, this would result in circa £ 13,000 savings from the budget. Conversely, if alternative option 2 was chosen, this would likely result in the need to find additional funding to support.

9. Legal implications

None.

10. Staffing implications

Without implementing the proposed pay award, there is an immediate financial impact on individuals, potentially creating a retention issue. Future recruitment could also be affected if Essex is not seen to be offering competitive salaries and therefore not attracting the best candidates.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

There are no direct equality implications associated with this paper.

12. Risks

It is an employer's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and other people who might be affected by their business.

Potential risks relating to recruitment and retention have been set out elsewhere in this report.

13. Governance Boards

This proposal was discussed at the formal Performance Meeting between the PFCC and the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive on 15 February 2024.

14. Background papers

Appendix 1 – Gold Book Pay Award 2024

Decision Process

Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

...I support the recommendation.....

Sign: 

Date:.....01/03/2024.....

Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

The NJC for Brigade Managers has agreed a 3% pay award for 2024, backdated to 1 January 2024. No other consultations are required with representative bodies locally.

Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority’s (“the Commissioner’s”) Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer



Sign:

Print: P. Brent-Isherwood

Date: 8 March 2024

Chief Finance Officer



Sign:

Print:Neil Cross.....

Date: .. 01/03/2024

Step 3 - Publication

Is the report for publication? YES/NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'none' if applicable)

None

If the report is not for publication, the Monitoring Officer will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Step 4 - Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1 Of Decision Sheet YES/NO

2 Of Appendix YES/NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

N/A

Date redaction carried out:

If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

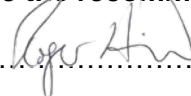
Sign:

Print:

Date signed:

Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:  (PFCC)

Print: ..Roger.Hirst.....

Date signed:13/03/2024.....

I

Sign: (PFCC / DPFCC)

Print:

Date signed: