

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

27 November 2025

Draft Minute Extract

PAY POLICY REPORT AND STATEMENT 2026/27 (AG170)

The Service Lead – Human Resources introduced the report which set out the council's pay policy statement for 2026/27 for consideration and recommendation to Council. It was confirmed that there were no material changes from the previous year, with the main differences relating to the change to the pension age to 57 from April 2028 and slight amendments to the policy relating to "acting up" allowances.

The Service Lead responded to members' questions as summarised below:

- a) The rationale for extending the "acting up" allowance period beyond 12 months.
- b) Clarification on the current living wage that was being paid and whether contractors were required to pay the living wage. The Director (Legal) agreed to check this point.
NB Subsequent to the meeting, the Director circulated a written response to committee members which in summary confirmed that a standard paragraph was included all of the council's Tender and Request for Quote templates stating that the council was an accredited Living Wage employer which applied to both its own employees and its suppliers. It was also referenced throughout the councils 'Guide to Sustainable Procurement' and then reinforced in contract terms.
- c) The number of apprentices currently in employment and whether apprentices were paid a living wage. The Service Lead advised that apprentices were paid according to a separate pay scale which she would circulate to members outside of the meeting.
NB: Subsequent to the meeting, it was confirmed that the council currently had five apprentices who were paid the Living Wage (£24,243). In addition, there were three existing staff members undertaking upskilling apprenticeships and these individuals remain on their existing pay grades.
- d) The reason for the pay ratio benchmark of 20:1 and whether there was the possibility of updating the pay statement to aim for a lower ratio. The Service Lead agreed this would be reviewed as the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process progressed.
- e) The current number of agency staff and the impact this had on the pay structure.
- f) Concerns about staff retention and a potential greater increase in agency staff due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL):

That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2026/27 be adopted.