

Bristol City Council
Pay Policy Statement
for the period
1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027

1. Introduction

- a. It is essential that the Council attracts and keeps people with the right talents and commitment to lead and deliver effective services to Bristol's citizens. At the same time the Council has to ensure best value for the taxpayer.
- b. This Statement explains the Council's pay policies for its highest and lowest-paid employees. For the avoidance of doubt "employees" means those individuals who have a contract of employment with Bristol City Council. It therefore excludes agency and interim workers and officeholders. Information and pay ratios for "off-payroll" agency and interim workers are contained in Appendix A.
- c. It is written and published in line with the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) and guidance issued by the Secretary of State (the Guidance). It is also in line with Guidance issued under Section 26 of the Local Government Act 1999. The Guidance is clear that decisions on pay policies should be made by Councillors. The Council is committed to making sure that all Councillors have a say on how pay decisions are made, especially about its highest-paid employees. To achieve this, the Statement is reviewed every year. The Leader is consulted, and any proposals made are taken into account. The draft statement is considered by the Human Resources Committee and approved by Full Council. Both meetings are open to the public.
- d. As recommended by the Guidance, this Statement sets out clearly and separately its policies on each of the requirements listed in the relevant sections of the Act. The Guidance says that this is to help enable taxpayers to decide whether they are getting value for money in the way that public money is spent on local authority pay and reward.
- e. The Council is committed to equal pay for all its employees and to removing any bias in its pay systems related to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. Equal pay applies to all contractual terms and conditions as well as pay.
- f. The Council became an accredited Living Wage Employer with effect from 5 November 2018. The Council has paid its own employees no less than the Real Living Wage since 1 October 2014.
- g. Since 1 April 2020 apprentices aged 18 years and over have been paid the Real Living Wage (as set by the Living Wage Foundation); apprentices under 18 are paid 80% of the Real Living Wage.

2. Development priorities for 2026/27

These are as set out in the Council's Workforce Strategy.

3. Pay of the Council's highest-paid employees

- a. The Council's highest-paid employees are the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors. These roles are graded independently of the Council using the Hay methodology and the salaries are informed by market data and updated in line with national pay awards. Re-grading of Executive Director and Director roles is considered by the Chief Executive where there is a significant change in the job purpose or job outcomes. For the period covered by this Statement the salary ranges will be as below, subject to changes in line with national pay awards agreed by the Joint Negotiating Committees for Chief Executives of Local Authorities and Chief Officers:

	Minimum	Maximum
Chief Executive	£186,982	£197,982
Executive Director	£160,505	£190,505
Director (Level 2)	£119,124	£139,124
Director (Level 1)	£101,997	£121,997

- b. Please refer to paragraph 11 and Appendix A in relation to interim workers covering the roles of Chief Executive, Executive Director or Director.

4. Pay of the Council's lowest-paid employees

- a. The Council's lowest-paid employees are those who are paid the Real Living Wage. The Council has adopted this definition because it has decided that none of its employees should be paid less than the Real Living Wage. The Real Living Wage will be £13.45 per hour with effect from 1 April 2026, which equates to a minimum salary of £25,949 (based on a full-time week of 37 hours).
- b. Apprentices, interns, student placements and trainees aged 18+ are paid no less than the Real Living Wage; those aged under 18 are paid no less than 80% of the Real Living Wage (£13.45 per hour for 2026/27). An additional allowance of £25 per week is paid to apprentices who have left local authority care, and this is paid throughout their apprenticeship for as long as they live in independent accommodation.

5. Relationship between the pay of the Council's highest and lowest-paid employees

- a. Will Hutton's 2011 Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector recommended that all public service organisations publish their top to median pay ratio to allow the public to hold them to account. The Government's terms of reference for the Hutton review suggested that no public sector manager should earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation. The Council's policy is that the pay of the highest paid employee should be no more than 10 times that of the lowest full-time equivalent paid employee.
- b. The ratios are calculated based on the salary the employee receives before tax and other deductions. They do not include employers' National Insurance Contributions and Local Government Pension Scheme contributions. The total cost of employment is higher than that shown.

- c. The change in these ratios at the Council over recent years is shown in the following table:

Date	Top to median pay ratio	Top to lowest salary ratio
31 March 2014	6.68:1	12.87:1
31 March 2015	6.29:1	11.85:1
31 December 2015	6.75:1	11.33:1
31 December 2016	6.23:1	10.05:1
31 December 2017	5.24:1	8.34:1
31 December 2018	6.03:1	9.77:1
31 December 2019	5.89:1	9.50:1
31 December 2020	5.73:1	9.45:1
31 December 2021	5.63:1	9.36:1
31 December 2022	5.46:1	8.93:1
31 December 2023	5.38:1	8.58:1
06 January 2025	5.25:1	8.29:1
31 December 2025	5.31:1	8.11:1

6. Pay of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors when they start

- a. Pay on commencement of employment will be within 10% of the minimum of the range unless otherwise agreed by the Selection Committee in light of market pay evidence.
- b. The Guidance says that Full Council or a meeting of Members should have the opportunity to vote before salary packages totaling £100,000 or more are offered for new appointments. Through its Constitution Full Council delegates this to the Selection Committee.

7. Increases and additions to pay for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors

- a. The Council will apply national pay awards agreed by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities and the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities.
- b. Any other changes to the pay of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors will be determined by the Human Resources Committee, except for changes within 10% of the minimum of the ranges for Executive Directors and Directors, which can be approved by the Chief Executive.
- d. Re-grading of Executive Director and Director roles is considered by the Chief Executive where there is a significant change in the job purpose or job outcomes.
- e. The Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors are not eligible for market pay supplements or any other additions to pay.

8. Performance-related pay for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors

There is currently no performance-related pay for Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors.

9. Bonuses for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors

There are currently no bonuses for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors.

10. Pay of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors when they leave

- a. When a Chief Executive, Executive Director or Director leaves they will be paid in line with what they are entitled to under their contract of employment (their notice period is three months) and the Council's policies.
- b. The dismissal and/or compensation for loss of office of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors is determined by the Human Resources Committee (except for the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, where any dismissal is a matter for Full Council).

11. Paying the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors "off-payroll"

- a. Where individuals appointed to cover the roles of Chief Executive, Executive Directors or Directors are not employees of the Council, they will be engaged in line with the Council's financial and procurement regulations and the relevant tax legislation (e.g. IR35). Such appointments will be made in line with the relevant guidance.
- b. Procedures and pay ratios for "off-payroll" workers are contained in Appendix A.

12. Returning Officer fees

The Council's Returning Officer for elections and referenda is appointed by Full Council. Fees are paid for these duties. They vary depending on the type of poll and are published prior to each election. Fees for most polls (including national elections and referenda) are set and paid by the Government (rather than the Council).

13. More information about the pay of Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors

The Council is committed to being open about its policies on pay. Approved pay policy statements are published on the Council's website at: [Senior officers' pay](#). Other information that the Council has to publish under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 is available via that webpage.

14. Pay Gap Reporting

We publish our gender, ethnicity, disability and LGB pay gap every 12 months on the Council's website at: [How we measure equality and diversity](#).