

## **SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Meeting	<b>APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE</b>
Meeting Date	<b>24 JANUARY 2024</b>
Report of	<b>CLERK TO THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>
Report Sponsor(s)	<b>MONITORING OFFICER</b>
Subject	<b>GOLD BOOK PAY AWARD AND TWIN TRACKING</b>

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report asks members for a decision on 'Gold Book' employees of fire service pay (i.e. Brigade Managers).

The National Employers for the Fire Service (the NJC for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services) has proposed a final pay award for all 'Gold Book' employees of fire services (i.e. Brigade Managers).

The Pay award was agreed on 31st May 2023 (Appendix 1 – NJC Circular). This proposes a settlement of 4.0% and 3.5% per annum from January 2022 and January 2023 respectively. Caps on annual increases proposed in the previous (4th March) offer have now been removed (Appendix 2).

'Gold Book' includes the Chief Fire Officer, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (the Principal Officer Team), and consequentially the Director of Finance & Procurement and the Director of People & Culture as their pay is linked to that of the Chief Fire Officer.

Alternate options for Gold Book pay are set out in the paper and the Members of the Appointments Committee are requested to approve their preferred option.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Members are recommended to:-

- a) Consider and comment on the Gold Book Pay draft Annual report
- b) Determine which Twin Track approach to implement.

---

### **CONTENTS**

Main Report  
Appendix 1 – NJC Circular 31 May 2023  
Appendix 2 – NJC Circular 4 March 2023



## Introduction

Pay and remuneration for Brigade Managers is determined by a twin-track approach. The first track is by the National Joint Council (NJC) of the Local Government Association (LGA) who annually review the level of pay increase applicable to all those covered by the agreement. In doing so, the NJC considers affordability, other relevant pay deals and the rate of inflation at the appropriate date. Any increase agreed by the NJC is communicated to fire authorities by a national circular. The NJC also provides minimum salary level for CFOs.

The second track is undertaken by the local FRA who will consider the NJC advice and all other circumstances to determine the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Managers annually.

In addition to this twin track approach, SYFRA determined some years ago that Brigade Managers in SYFR are paid on the following basis:

- *The DCFO's salary is 85% that of the CFO's salary*
- *The ACFO's is 80% that of the CFO's salary*

And in 2022 also determined that:

- *Director of Finance & Procurement (corporate) is 60% that of the CFO's salary (pro rata to hours worked – 0.6fte)*
- *Director of People & Culture (corporate) is 60% that of the CFO's salary (pro rata to hours worked – 0.8fte).*

SYFR produces an annual Pay Policy statement that is approved by the FRA. The policy states:

*“When determining pay, for consistency, the Authority considers a number of factors. These are:*

- *current level of pay published annually by NJC (Gold Book);*
- *current level of pay published annually by JNC/NJC;*
- *operational responsibility;*
- *number of staff managed and direct reports;*
- *fire risk;*
- *population of the area serviced; and*
- *budget responsibility*

*This Authority normally engages the services of external specialists to carry out salary reviews for their Brigade Manager positions. The specialists will compare salaries amongst other Brigades as well as the wider public sector and will draw conclusions from their findings to assist the Authority in determining base pay for its Brigade Managers.”*

It has been several years since the FRA has engaged the services of external specialists to carry out salary reviews for Brigade Managers.

## **2022 & 2023 Pay Agreement and twin track**

On 26 May 2023, following an extended period of negotiations, the Brigade Managers pay offer from the NJC for 2022 & 2023 was agreed, with a 4% and 3.5% uplift respectively (see Appendix 1 – NJC Circular).

This was agreed with some degree of reluctance by the Fire Leaders Association (FLA) due, in their view, the inability to have regular access and meaningful discussion throughout the period of the pay claim resulting in an ineffective pay negotiation mechanism.

The FLA have stated:

*“The pay offer for 2022 and 2023 falls significantly shorter than that agreed with those employees employed under the Grey Book Conditions of Service. The reference to the twin track option to compensate for a reduced pay offer rather than compensate for market forces in areas of higher cost of living undermines collective pay negotiations.*

*The erosion of terms and conditions will have longer term impacts on pay differentials, recruitment and retention and Brigade Managers now achieving salaries that have very little pay difference to that of Grey Book roles in comparison to role and responsibility.”*

The FLA go on to request further discussions with the NJC on the twin track approach in relation to the 2024 pay negotiations, which the NJC have agreed to.

The alternative option to the NJC Employers award is one that has prevailed until recently across the whole of the fire service in that the Brigade Managers receive the same pay award as all other firefighters as this would then ensure that the pay differentials in role and responsibilities is maintained across the whole of the firefighter staffing structure.

## **Impact of the 2022 & 2023 Pay Offer**

The concerns highlighted above by the FLA has resulted in a number of Executive teams around the country seeking to utilise the local element of the twin track approach to obtain a further uplift to the 2022 & 2023 pay offer to the same level as the Grey Book pay award (7% + 5%). We are aware of a number of FRA's who have approved that approach, including within the Yorkshire & Humber region. We are also aware that many FRA's have recommenced an annual review of Brigade Manager salaries using external specialists.

It is important that the FRA are aware of the implications of these variations, particularly within our region and the potential impact on future recruitment and retention, morale and the ability to deliver continuous improvement in particularly challenging times.

## **Options**

There are the following options for members to consider in this report

1. The Authority adopts the NJC Gold Book pay award only – 4% and 3.5% from January 2022 and January 2023 respectively
2. The Authority adopts NJC Gold Book pay award and engages external specialists to undertake a review of Brigade Manager salaries at a cost of circa £5k + VAT.
3. The Authority determines Brigade Managers receive the same pay award as their Grey Book (firefighter) counterparts. This would mean an increase of 7% from 1st January 2022 and then an increase of 5% from 1st January 2023.

Option 3 provides equity with the pay award for all of the different levels of firefighter staffing throughout the fire service structure and would thereby maintain the pay differentials that are in place to reflect the special roles and responsibilities of the Principal Officer Team.

### Financial implications

Table 1: showing the CFO and ACFO salary before the proposed increase and what it will be under the proposed options compared to the Maximum grey book salary.

Date	January 2021	January 2022	Option 1 revised Jan 2023	Option 2 revised Jan 2023	Option 3 revised Jan 2023
A- CFO salary per annum	£159k	£166k	£171k	Unknown*	£179k
B- ACFO Salary per Annum (80% of CFO)	£127k	£132k	£137k	Unknown*	£143k
C- Maximum Grey Book Salary **	£86k	£92k	£97k	£97k	£97k
Differential B-C	£32k	£33k	£34k	-	£36k

\* under option 2 the salary would be subject to an external recommendation

\*\* Includes 7.5% local uplift, 8.8% Continuous Duty, 20% Flexi-duty.

Note: only CFO salary and the ACFO salary is shown in this illustration the other Gold Book associated salaries are a percentage of the CFO salary as shown above.

Table 2: shows the budget for Gold Book pay vs the cost of the proposed options

Date	Budget		Option 1 – revised costs		Option 2 – revised costs		Option 3 – revised costs	
	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24
Gold Book Pay Total	£530k	£618k	£545k**	£587k	Unknown*	Unknown*	£564k**	£612k

\* under option 2 the salary would be subject to an external recommendation.

\*\* 22/23 includes back pay relating to 21/22

Table 3: shows the backpay costs for Gold Book pay under the proposed options

Date	Option 1 – revised budget		Option 2 – revised budget		Option 3 – revised budget	
	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24
Gold Book Pay Budget	£28k	£33k	Unknown*	Unknown*	£47k	£58k

The above tables show that:

- 1) The financial value of the differential between Grey Book and CFO pay is maintained under either option within SYFR, however other FRS's offering Grey Book pay arrangements may still impact on SYFR recruitment and retention.
- 3) The costs of option 1 are within budget when 21/22 back pay is excluded (Table 2). While operational costs are slightly higher than budget due to current backfill arrangements, these are offset by reduced corporate directors savings due to vacancies in the period.
- 4) The total backpay is £44k higher for option 3 compared to option 1.

## Recommendation

The Authority is recommended to comment on the report and approve their preferred option to be applied to the remuneration of the service's Gold Book staff and applicable Director positions for both the 1st January 2022 and 1st January 2023 pay periods (where applicable).

**CONTRIBUTION TO OUR ASPIRATIONS** (tick all that apply)

- Be a great place to work-** we will create the right culture, values and behaviours to make this a brilliant place to work that is inclusive for all
- Put people first-** we will spend money carefully, use our resources wisely and collaborate with others to provide the best deal to the communities we serve
- Strive to be the best in everything we do-** we will work with others, make the most of technology and develop leaders to become the very best at what we can be

**CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

(tick all that apply to your report and add supporting information for each in the box below)

- [HMICFRS Inspection Framework e.g. Diagnostic area and/ or diagnostic questions](#)
- [SYFR Inspection report Areas for Improvement \(AFIs\)](#)
- [Fit for the Future Improvement Objectives](#)
- [Professional Standards for Fire & Rescue Services in England](#)
- [SYFR Service Plan 2023-24 Priorities](#)
- [SYFR Community Risk Management Plan 2021-24](#)

The issues identified in the Gold Book Pay Award and Twin Tracking reports are inherently linked to Fit for the Future Improvements and SYFR Service Plan Priorities.
---

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION** (tick relevant box)

- Yes
- No

If you have ticked 'Yes' please provide brief details in the box below and include the third party/parties it would involve:

**CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY IMPLICATIONS**

10. The pay of Principles Officers and roles with associated pay influences recruitment and retention of key Executive Management Team personnel holding corporate leadership strategic roles, through which the delivery of SYFR Service Priorities are assessed, monitored and reviewed.

**EQUALITY ANALYSIS COMPLETED** (tick relevant box)

- Yes

If you have ticked 'Yes' please complete the below comment boxes providing details as follows:

Summary of any Adverse Impacts Identified:	Key Mitigating Actions Proposed and Agreed:

- No
- N/A

If you have ticked 'No' or 'N/A' please complete the comments box below providing details of why an EA is not required/is outstanding:

This report does not relate to the introduction of a new policy, strategy or procedure. The decision impacts current post holders.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

- Yes  
 No  
 N/A

If you have ticked 'No' or 'N/A' please complete the comments box below providing details of why a Health and Safety Risk Assessment is not required/is outstanding:

This report covers Gold Book Pay Award and Twin Tracking and associate roles and does not require a H&S / risk assessment.

## SCHEME OF DELEGATION

11. Under the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority [Scheme of Delegation](#) a decision \*is required / \*has been approved at Service level.

Delegated Power  Yes  
 No

If yes, please complete the comments box indicating under which delegated power.

This report is not submitted under delegated powers. The constitution requires the Appointments Committee to determine the Gold Book pay award.

## IMPLICATIONS

12. Consider whether this report has any of the following implications and if so, address them below:., Diversity, Financial, Asset Management, Environmental and Sustainability, Fleet, Communications, ICT, Health and Safety, Data Protection, Collaboration, Legal and Industrial Relations implications have been considered in compiling this report.

List of background documents		
N/A		
Report Author:	Name:	Sukdave Ghuman
	e-mail:	<a href="mailto:sukdaveghuman@barnsley.gov.uk">sukdaveghuman@barnsley.gov.uk</a>
	Tel no:	01226 772279