

Human Resources

Pay & Benefits Package

Your reward for working for the Council goes beyond the salary you receive. This statement provides an overview to help you better understand how these benefits make up your total reward package. Further detailed information can be found on the Council intranet pages (HR & Payroll A-Z of information) and the HR Portal.

Pay

Ninety five percent of the Council's jobs (excluding School jobs) are covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Single Status Agreement which contains the nationally agreed spinal points. All jobs are evaluated against the pay & grading scheme, ensuring a transparent scheme where fair & consistent judgements are made on pay.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The Council offers access to a contributory pension scheme with the Council paying in over double the amount you pay towards your pension benefits payable on retirement.

- The scheme is designed to pay an annual pension plus a lump sum upon retirement
- Employees may request consideration of a more flexible retirement by requesting to reduce their hours or moving to a lower graded post thereby remaining in work whilst receiving their pension benefits
- Widow's / Widower's / Children's pensions are payable subject to appropriate elections, nominations and rules of the scheme
- Scheme members who retire early through 'permanent' ill health may qualify for enhanced retirement benefits dependant on the nature and severity of their condition

Salary Sacrifice

The Council has several Salary Sacrifice Schemes in place which save you money by allowing you to have the cost of various benefits taken from your salary before stoppages. The Tax and National Insurance contributions that would have been deducted typically save about a third of the amount sacrificed if you are a basic rate taxpayer and up to a half if paying the higher rate.

- Additional Leave Purchase
- Cycle to Work
- Car Leasing

Voluntary Benefits

A wide selection of voluntary benefits is available on our Wider Wallet platform for you to choose from including access to discounts on range of different products and services. Examples of these discounts include local shops, retail vouchers, supermarkets, CD's, DVD's, travel insurance, holidays and travel, cinema and theatre tickets, entrance to theme parks and other attractions.

Holiday Entitlement

Full time workers have a statutory right to 28 days paid holiday a year including 8 bank holidays, the Council minimum entitlement, 34 days (including bank holidays), is 6 days higher.

	Leave Entitlement	Leave Entitlement after 5 Years
Designated Chief Officers	34	37
Bands K and above	33	36
Bands H to J	30	33
Bands A to G	26	31
Bank Holiday (All Grades)	8	8

You may also request to purchase up to an additional 5 days holiday with the cost able to be spread over the remainder of the leave year.

There are also circumstances where leave from work may help you maintain your work-life balance and the Council offers a range of potential options for dealing with certain situations:

- Time off for family emergencies - This can be taken in a variety of ways e.g. annual leave or unpaid leave
- Bereavement leave - Up to 5 days paid leave for bereavement of close relatives
- Dental and physiotherapy appointments - Time off is allowed during the working day subject to time taken being made up
- Disability leave - Up to 7 occasions of paid leave per year are available for assessment, treatment or rehabilitation including hospital / medical appointments for employees with a disability
- Blood donors - Paid time off given to attend local sessions
- Cancer screening - Paid time off to attend appointments for cancer screening
- Career break scheme - Up to 5 years of unpaid leave can be requested to enable employees to care for children, relatives or to undertake full time study
- Time off for public duties – In certain situations reasonable paid time off is given at full salary provided that prior approval is sought.

Flexible Working Patterns

We operate a comprehensive range of flexible working opportunities to allow you to achieve a better balance between your work and home life. Wherever it is practicable we try to accommodate your requests to work flexibly but access to schemes is dependent on the nature of the work you do.

- Flexi-time scheme - The scheme is available to many office-based jobs and operates within the hours of 7am-7pm. Within the rules of the scheme up to one flexi-day per month can be taken subject to approval
- Part-time working - Depending on the job role, this can be worked in a variety of patterns including part day, part week and part year
- Job share - The duties and responsibilities of one full-time job are divided (normally between two people). This arrangement is open to many jobs

- Compressed weeks or fortnights - Contracted hours are worked over 4 days instead of 5 or 9 days instead of 10
- Term-time working - This enables parents to spend time at home during school holidays
- Averaged / annualised hours - This allows employees to vary their working hours over a year enabling them to match their working hours to personal commitments
- Staggered hours - This enables a team to work a variety of start and end times covering a specific period
- Occasional home working - This allows employees to be more flexible with their workplace providing the opportunity to work from home on an 'as and when' basis
- Permanent home working - An employee works solely from home.

Hybrid Working

Hybrid working builds upon our flexible working policies and supports a culture of working wherever, whenever and however is most appropriate to get the work done.

This does not just cover working hours, locations, and workstyles, it is about being responsive and adaptive to service needs and advancements in technology. Hybrid working provides greater flexibility, particularly in relation to the time and location you can work, subject to the requirements of the service and individual jobs.

Our approach to hybrid working also links to the Council's vision to address the climate emergency, placing emphasis on the importance of sustainability and the health and wellbeing of both staff and the community. The benefits of improved work life balance, employee engagement and reduced travel make a direct contribution to this strategic priority.

Support for parents / carers

- Maternity / Adoption leave - Up to 52 weeks leave of absence with pay provided for certain specified periods within this (subject to length of service criteria and personal choice)
- Maternity support leave - Up to 5 days paid leave is available for partners /carers at or around the time of birth / adoption
- Parental leave - Up to 4 weeks unpaid leave can be taken per year up to the child's 5th birthday or in the case of a disabled child up to the child's 18th birthday

Other support available for employees

- Free 24-hour helpline for employees and their immediate family
- Reasonable adjustments and / or re-deployment where practical for employees requiring support after illness or due to disability
- Good health guide provided to all employees to help achieve healthier and safer lifestyles both at work and home.
- In the unfortunate circumstance of sickness preventing you coming into work you may receive occupational sick pay dependent upon you meeting the scheme criteria. Our sickness absence policy covers you for a period of paid absence, based on your length of service, up to twelve months. Payments are subject to Council agreement, medical advice and the rules of the Occupational Sick Pay Scheme.

Learning and development

An important aspect for all of us is the opportunity for development and progression with learning and development opportunities to meet both service needs and personal growth.

Your Personal Development Plan (part of your Performance Development Review) is an ideal way to plan your development and look at further development opportunities available to you. A wide range of learning and development methods can be used according to your individual need, learning style and work priorities.

They include:

- Coaching and Mentoring
- Work shadowing
- Participation in new projects
- Short term attachments to other sections or external secondment
- Self-directed learning - individual reading and research, e-learning and distance learning
- Acting up to cover all or part of a vacancy, maternity leave, long term sick leave etc.
- Learning from others identified as 'excellent' performers in specific skills/competencies.
- Short courses/conferences and seminars
- Qualification courses

Employee Involvement

You will have access to our range of employment involvement activities designed to allow you to shape how the Council develops. Your opinions are very important to us and are highly valued.

They include:

- New Joiners' Survey – to ensure we're getting our recruitment and induction processes right; we ask every new employee to complete a confidential questionnaire three months after starting their career with us
- Surveys – this is how we get your feedback (in a structured and confidential way) about a range of issues including what working at the Council is like for you
- Focus Groups – during the year we ask groups of employees to share their views and suggestions and offer valuable feedback
- Staff briefing sessions – the Leader and the Chief Executive like to get out and meet as many employees as they can so they hold these sessions several times per year