

Pay Policy Statement for the Year 2026 & 2027



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to publish, on their website, an annual Pay Policy Statement, which has been approved by the Human Resources (HR) Committee.
- 1.2 No remuneration may be made to officers that fall outside of the Pay Policy Statement, although it is possible for a meeting of the Full Council to amend the statement at any time. This policy may also include retrospective agreements made during the last financial year only.
- 1.3 In drawing up this statement, Rother District Council has considered the guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in February 2012 and the supplementary guidance issued in February 2013, as amended by the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.
- 1.4 Any expenditure over £500 will require approval to be given by Finance, HR and ultimately the Council's Spending Control Panel, consisting of the Chief Executive and Director of Resources. The Panel meets weekly, failure to comply with this provision may result in disciplinary action.
- 1.5 Rother District Council is committed to complying with the statutory obligation to pay the National Living Wage.
- 1.6 The rates in the table overleaf are for the National Living Wage (for those aged 21 and over) and the National Minimum Wage (for those of at least school leaving age). The rates change on 1 April every year. The National Living Wage, the minimum wage rate for all workers aged twenty-one and over, will rise by 4.1 per cent to £12.71. The minimum wage for 18–20-year-olds will increase to £10.85 and the rate for 16–17-year-olds will increase to £8.00.
- 1.7 In announcing these increases, the Government has accepted in full the recommendations made by the Low Pay Commission.
- 1.8 The increase in the National Living Wage will ensure a real-terms pay rise for low-paid workers. It will meet the Government's aim to ensure the rate does not drop below two-thirds of median earnings. The increase to the 18–20-Year-Old Rate makes progress towards alignment with the National Living Wage.

The rates announced in November 2025 are to take effect from April 2026:

	NMW Rate	Increase (£)	Increase (%)
National Living Wage (21 and over)	£12.71	50p	4.1
18–20-Year-Old Rate	£10.85	85p	8.5
16–17-Year-Old Rate	£8.00	45p	6.0
Apprentice Rate	£8.00	45p	6.0
Accommodation Offset	£11.10	44p	4.1

- 1.9 Rother District Council fully endorses and supports the requirement to be open and transparent about the pay of our staff.
- 1.10 The Council is committed to paying nationally negotiated pay awards and this Pay Policy Statement will be updated as and when any such pay awards are agreed. The council has local terms and conditions of service, but from 1st April 2026, national pay awards will be followed for all staff.
- 1.11 All employees, including Chief Officers, are normally appointed on the lowest pay spine column point for their job evaluated grade. In exceptional circumstances employees may be appointed at a higher point within the evaluated grade. Such instances where, to attract the most experienced and sought-after skills for the good of the Council and where there is competition or shortages, may determine a higher starting spinal point.
- 1.12 Incremental progression operates within the Council's evaluated grades and local pay spine. Progression is designed to reward the acquisition and application of skills and experience over time and will be applied fairly and consistently in line with equal pay and the NJC national framework.

- 1.13 Where incremental progression applies, a single Council-wide incremental date of 1 April will operate each year. Eligible employees will move by one SCP within their grade on 1 April until the top of the grade is reached.
- 1.14 New starters appointed between 1 October and 31 March inclusive will normally receive their first increment following completion of the probationary period.
- 1.15 No increment is payable once the top SCP of the grade is reached, unless a regrading occurs through job evaluation or a separate pay award applies nationally.
- 1.16 An employee may appeal a decision to defer or withhold an increment by writing to HR within 10 working days of notification. Appeals will be heard by a manager not previously involved, with advice from HR.

2. Remuneration of Chief Officers

2.1 The following Rother District Council (RDC) posts have been defined as Chief Officers, and their salary bands are as follows:

Additionally, a comparison of salary levels from lowest to highest and median are shown here.

Senior Salaries and Pay Multiples

Pay Multiple (Nov 2025 data)	
Lowest Pay (Foundation RLW)	£ 24,310.00
Highest Pay	£ 138,421.00
Multiple	5.69
Median Pay	£ 31,279.00
Highest Pay	£ 138,421.00
Multiple	4.43

Remuneration Band (Nov 2025 data)	
£50,000.00-£54,995.00	11
£55,000.00-£59,995.00	6
£60,000.00-£64,995.00	
£65,000.00-£69,995.00	
£70,000.00-£74,995.00	6
£75,000.00-£79,995.00	
£80,000.00-£84,995.00	
£85,000.00-£89,995.00	
£90,000.00-£94,995.00	
£95,000.00-£99,995.00	
£100,000.00-£104,995.00	
£105,000.00-£109,995.00	
£110,000.00-£114,995.00	2
£115,000.00-£119,995.00	
£120,000.00-£124,995.00	
£125,000.00-£129,995.00	
£130,000.00-£134,995.00	1

2.2 Returning Officer Fees

The Chief Executive is appointed as the Council's Returning Officer in accordance with the Representation of the People's Act 1983. The Returning Officer is eligible for fees linked to duties undertaken for running national, or local elections/referenda. These fees are determined by the number of electors registered in the district/parliamentary constituency and are paid subject to a formula applied by the Government for determining fees to all Returning Officers across the Country.

2.3 Job Evaluation

The pay of all employees is based on job evaluation by the HR Department.

2.4 Terms and Conditions of Employment

All employees of the Council are on local terms and conditions of service.

2.5 Expenses

There are occasions when employees incur additional expenditure than normal while undertaking their official duties on behalf of the Council away from their normal place of work. The Council has a comprehensive Travel and Subsistence Expenses Scheme, which applies to all our staff.

2.6 Payment of Professional Fees

The Council will pay the cost of one professional subscription per annum, per employee, including Chief Officers, which is relevant and necessary for the role. More than one professional subscription may be paid in some cases at the line manager's discretion, if the subscription is deemed essential for the role. This payment supports the Council to attract and retain staff in professional roles that require membership of a professional body.

2.7 Honoraria

An honoraria payment may be made to an employee, including to a Chief Officer, in recognition of undertaking temporarily additional or outstanding extra work, which is: -

2.7.1 Outside the normal scope of the duties and responsibilities of the employee

2.7.2 Over an extended period undertaking part of the duties of a higher graded post

2.7.3 Or where the additional duties and responsibilities are exceptionally

onerous

2.7.4 Or in situations which merit the employee being rewarded for specific work.

The Honoraria Scheme applies in these circumstances, and the amount of payment is based on the duties undertaken.

2.8 Acting Up

Acting Up arises when an employee temporarily undertakes full or part duties of a higher graded post for a consecutive period of at least four weeks.

All employees, including Chief Officers, are entitled to an acting up payment in recognition of the responsibilities. Decisions on payment consider the following: -

- The nature and complexity of the responsibilities, undertaken by the employee and their current spinal column point
- Whether the employee is undertaking full or part responsibilities
- If the employee is placed into post as a development opportunity

2.10 Secondments

Secondments are intended to provide developmental opportunities to gain skills and experience rather than for financial gain. Therefore, secondees will normally transfer from their current position into the secondment on their existing salary. Terms and conditions of the secondee may change depending on the local variations within the department. However, if there is a significant difference between the secondment and the individual's salary, this must be brought to the attention of the HR Manager and a decision will be taken, in conjunction with the relevant Director on the appropriate level of remuneration. This may require a job evaluation exercise.

2.11 Retention Payments

In October, the HR Committee approved the introduction of some simple retention payments to retain staff in high risk/turnover areas, including surveyors and Senior Environmental Health Officers. Retention payments are being considered for high risk/flight/hard to fill job roles up to 15% a year on the run up to Local Government Reorganisation. 15% is the maximum figure and can be applied to jobs following Spending Control Panel approval. Payment will be made either as a one-off lump sum or spread evenly over 12 months at the line manager's discretion. If an employee leaves before the end of the 12-month period, entitlement is limited to the pro-rated amount up to the leaving date. Where a lump sum has been paid and this exceeds the pro-rated entitlement, any overpayment will be recovered. Where payments are spread monthly, only instalments up to the leaving date will be paid and no further amounts will be due

2.12 Market Supplements

A market supplement is payable for posts (including Chief Officer posts), which are critical to the delivery of essential/statutory services, and to which the Council has been unable to recruit or retain.

External labour market conditions can produce a situation in which staff with scarce skills and expertise can command higher salaries than the maximum provided under the current grading structure for the post. In these circumstances, based on evidence from the relevant labour market, it may be deemed appropriate to pay an additional Market Factor Supplement in addition to basic pay. They are not linked to an individual's actual or anticipated performance within the role but are linked to the difficulty in recruiting for certain posts requiring specific skills and qualifications.

It is essential that the rationale and supporting evidence for payment of a market supplement remains current and a review is documented. These payments are reviewed annually to ensure they are still justifiable and can be changed or withdrawn.

2.13 Pay Protection

An employee, who is redeployed to a suitable post which is one grade lower, will receive protection of earnings for a period of three years. The salary will be frozen at its current level, and the employee will not receive annual pay awards. At the end of the protection period, the employee will be placed on the salary grade relevant to the redeployed post.

Where an employee accepts redeployment to a post which is more than one grade lower, there is no entitlement to protection of earnings. In exceptional circumstances, to minimise financial hardship and avoid redundancies, Directors may, subject to budgetary considerations, exercise discretion to grant some element of protection. This would apply for no longer than one year.

2.14 Termination Payments

In the event of a redundancy situation, all employees, including Chief Officers, are entitled to a redundancy payment based on a multiple of 1.75 times statutory provision, based on weekly pay, subject to a cap of 30 weeks as the maximum number of weeks payable, and to a cap of 20 years' service.

The terms, and any payment relating to the termination of employment of any officer of the Council in any contentious circumstances which do not result from an award made by an Employment Tribunal or Court are settled by the Council on the basis of the legal merits of the case, the time and disruption which protracted litigation would involve, any limit of statutory entitlement on monetary claim available to an employee, and what is considered prudent in all circumstances.

Any redundancy or severance packages of £100,000 or more will be approved by Full Council. In presenting the information to Full Council, the components of any such severance package will be set out including salary paid in lieu; redundancy compensation; pension entitlements; holiday pay; and fees or allowances paid.

If an application for a post (including Chief Officer posts) is in receipt of a severance payment from any local authority, or a Local Government retirement pension, this does not form part of the Council's decision as to whether they should be appointed.

Any employee who is made redundant, including Chief Officers, must have a break of at least four weeks and one day to retain a redundancy payment before they can be re-employed by the Council in a different position.

2.15 Pension Payments

All employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, including Chief Officers, are entitled to a retirement pension calculated in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

2.16 Interims (may also be known as Agency Workers) and Consultancies

There will be occasions where interims are engaged to undertake duties of posts that are vacant. There are various reasons for engaging interims i.e. there are specialist skills and experience that are required to fill the gap whilst recruitment takes place. In these circumstances, where it is more appropriate to engage interims, the Council follows HMRC guidelines to ensure the current employment status is identified. When a need for an 'interim' arises, recruitment is agreed via the Moratorium (MORI) process and the Spending Control Panel have the final decision.

Individuals engaged via an agency will, in most instances, be paid at a market rate consistent with the role at that job and level.

The Council will consider any relevant market factors to support payment of a premium rate necessary to secure appropriate levels of skills and expertise.

Consultancies over £5,000 (excluding cover for established posts) or any consultancy/employment offered to former senior officers of the Council of third tier and above, are "significant officer decision". (Significant officer decisions are circulated monthly to all Members and published on the website).

2.17 Performance Related Pay/Bonuses

The Council does not operate performance-related pay (PRP) schemes, sales/commission bonuses, or other discretionary non-consolidated awards.

The only discretionary monetary arrangements beyond basic pay are the Council's Honoraria Scheme, Acting Up allowances, Market Supplements and Retention Payments, justified by defined criteria and subject to review and withdrawal.

2.18 Apprenticeships

Following the Autumn Budget on 26 November 2025, the Chancellor confirmed additional investment to progress the Growth and Skills Levy. This forms part of the Government's strategy to strengthen skills for economic growth, introduce greater flexibility for employers, and help young people access skilled, well-paid roles. The Council uses the Levy in full and has been paying 5% of the apprenticeship fee where the Levy has been exhausted.

Key Changes

- **Funding for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises:** From August 2026, apprenticeships for eligible 16–24-year-olds will be fully funded for non-levy paying employers.
- **New Training Options:** From April 2026, short training courses—called apprenticeship units—will launch in priority areas such as AI, digital, and engineering.

Apprenticeship System Simplification (from 2026/27 academic year)

- Removal of the 10% levy account uplift.
- Levy fund expiry reduced from 24 months to 12 months.
- Co-investment rate for levy-paying employers adjusted to 75% once funds are exhausted.
- Ongoing work with employers to streamline apprenticeship standards and shape future reforms.

Further details will be published early in 2026.

3. Remuneration of Our Lowest Paid Employees

All RDC employees are paid in accordance with a historically and locally determined salary scale, in accordance with their historic pay agreements. From the 1 April 2026, all staff will be part of the nationally agreed pay arrangements but are not moving on to national terms and conditions which remain local. Some of our lowest paid employees are on the National Living Wage, which is currently set to be £12.71 from 1 April 2026.

3.1 Unsocial Hours Payments

The Council has a comprehensive Working Pattern Arrangement Scheme which sets out the allowance's payable for: -

- 3.1.1 Overtime (up to and including LSO)
- 3.1.2 Saturday and Sunday working
- 3.1.3 Bank holidays
- 3.1.5 Shift working
- 3.1.6 Standby, on-call and call-out

3.2 Other Benefits

There are other benefits as part of the Council's policy, and these are outlined below:

- Pension. All staff in any grade can join the Local Government Pension Scheme and are encouraged to do so. The contribution rate for staff is set nationally.
- Car Payment. This is a standard part of a pay package for officers designated as essential users and/or officers graded PO2 and above. The value of the package is £2907, £3768 for officers graded MG1 and above.
- Sports Centre Membership. A preferential membership rate for Freedom Leisure is offered to all staff.
- Pluxee benefits platform – enabling access to high street discounts and vouchers as well as salary sacrifice schemes and financial products.
- Electoral Service Payments. Some staff, because of their employment by the Returning Officer across the range of elections, receive payments for their involvement in running an election. These are outside the Council's pay policy and are set externally as part of the elections process.
- Relocation. A relocation package is sometimes offered as part of a recruitment package. This is a one-off package, up to a maximum of £7000, covering relocation costs. Alternatively, a smaller relocation grant of £1500 is offered in some circumstances.

3.3 Pay Awards

Pay awards are negotiated nationally for separate groups of employees from 1 April 2026: -

- 3.3.1 Chief Executive
- 3.3.2 Chief Officers
- 3.3.3 National Joint Council for Local Government

Rother District Council adopts the National Joint Council (NJC) collective bargaining process and applies NJC national pay awards in full under the Green Book

framework. Each year the NJC trade unions submit a national pay claim and negotiations with the National Employers are conducted ahead of the 1 April settlement date; while agreement can be reached later in the year, any award is effective from 1 April and implemented with backpay to that date (including arrangements for former employees on request). On confirmation of the NJC award, HR will brief Heads of Service and recognised trade unions, update the pay spine and allowances, notify all staff of the outcome and effective date, and process backdated payments in the next available payroll

3.4 Volunteering Leave

- 3.4.1 The Council supports employee participation in community life and will grant up to one day (7.4 hours for a full-time employee, pro-rated for part-time employees) paid volunteering leave per annum to undertake volunteering activity that benefits communities within the Rother district.
- 3.4.2 All permanent and fixed-term employees are eligible once they have completed their probationary period. Agency workers and contractors are not eligible under this scheme.
- 3.4.3 Volunteering must be with a registered charity, school/college, constituted community group, town or parish council, or recognised social enterprise providing community benefit in Rother. Political party activity and activities primarily for private or family benefit do not qualify.
- 3.4.4 Requests should be submitted to the line manager at least four weeks in advance, confirming the organisation, date(s), activity and contact details. Approval is subject to service needs and may be refused or rescheduled if operationally necessary; managers should seek to accommodate requests wherever practicable.
- 3.4.5 Approved volunteering leave is paid at basic pay only and does not attract overtime or additional enhancements.
- 3.4.6 Employees must comply with the host organisation's health and safety requirements and safeguarding obligations. Where the activity involves regulated work with children or vulnerable adults, the employee must ensure appropriate checks and supervision are in place.
- 3.4.7 Normal commuting costs are the employee's responsibility. Any additional expenses must be agreed with the line manager in advance and claimed under the Travel and Subsistence Expenses Scheme where eligible.
- 3.4.8 While volunteering under this scheme, employees are representing the Council and must uphold the Council's Code of Conduct and values at all times.

5. Gender Pay Gap Information

Employers with at least 250 employees must publish annual information about their gender pay gap. We publish this on our website, and the [Government's gender pay gap website](#). This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

We completed and uploaded the gender pay gap for the last financial year in October 2025.

Like most local authorities, RDC employs more women than men (Approx. 60% women, 40% men based on permanent employees).

6. Monitoring and Managing Payroll

The Council regularly audits HR and Payroll to ensure that appropriate processes are taking place, including training.

From December 2025, HR will provide Heads of Service with full details of their staff who are receiving honorarium payments, Acting Up Allowances, Retention Payments and Market Supplements. In January 2026, the Senior Leadership Team will receive a report on the payments and the end dates will be checked and verified.

The Council Payroll Manager ensures that the relationship with Unit 4 is maintained, the system is modified as necessary and that only complex problems are escalated.

7. Deductions and Recovery

7.1 The Council will only make deductions from wages where this is lawful. A deduction is lawful if it is required or authorised by statute, expressly permitted by the worker's contract, or agreed in writing in advance by the worker; recovery of accidental overpayments is also permitted by law. This reflects sections 13 and 14 of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

7.2 By accepting employment with the Council, employees agree that the Council may, subject to clause 7.6 and the National Minimum Wage rules, deduct from salary any sums properly due to the Council.

This includes (without limitation):

- a) any overpayment of wages, salary or expenses;
- b) any advances or loans made to the employee by the Council; and
- c) a day's or part-day's pay for each day or part-day of unauthorised absence.

“Unauthorised absence” means a failure to attend work where the absence is not due to notified and genuine sickness, pre-authorised leave, or other genuine reasons beyond the employee’s control that are acceptable to the Council. Any deduction will be itemised on the employee’s payslip.

- 7.3 Where an overpayment is identified, the Council will write to the employee setting out the amount, the reason, and the proposed method of recovery before any deductions are made. Recovery will normally be made in the next available pay run for a one-off error identified promptly, or otherwise over a reasonable period having regard to the amount involved and individual circumstances. On termination, any outstanding balance may be set off against sums due in the final salary (excluding any statutory redundancy pay), with any shortfall invoiced to the employee. This approach is consistent with section 14 ERA 1996.
- 7.4 Where the Council makes an advance or loan, recovery terms will be confirmed in writing in advance. Deductions will then be made in accordance with the agreed schedule, consistent with section 13 ERA 1996.
- 7.6 The Council will not make or operate deductions in a way that unlawfully reduces a worker’s pay below the NMW/NLW, save where legislation expressly allows (for example, recovery of an accidental overpayment). Where deductions relate to training costs, any recovery through pay will only be made where there was clear prior contractual/written agreement, and the Council will apply ACAS guidance on final pay and training deductions.
- 7.7 Where the Council funds external training or qualifications (other than apprenticeship training covered by clause 8.8), repayment may be required if the employee leaves within a defined period after completion, provided that:
- a) the obligation was agreed in writing before the costs were incurred;
 - b) the amount is reasonable and proportionate (for example, on a sliding-scale that reduces over time); and
 - c) any deduction from pay complies with the ERA 1996 and NMW/NLW rules. The Council will follow ACAS guidance on deductions for training and will ensure arrangements are not punitive.
- 7.8 The Council will not require apprentices to repay the eligible cost of apprenticeship training or assessment, including where publicly funded, in line with the Department for Education’s apprenticeship funding rules. Any such costs must not be passed to the apprentice.
- 7.9 Where the Council provides relocation assistance, a repayment obligation may apply if the employee leaves within a defined period. Any such arrangement will be set out in writing in advance (including any sliding-scale), will be reasonable and proportionate, and will be operated in line with the ERA 1996 rules on deductions and HMRC’s guidance on the tax treatment

of relocation expenses.

8. Conclusion

This statement will be approved by the HR Committee and Full Council in February 2026.

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