

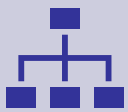
Pay structure reform

A confidential capture of the journey to here
and the ambition as at June 2025

History of Grey Book pay



The pay increases up to 2002 were in accordance with a long-standing pay formula based on the upper quartile of male manual workers earnings.



New structure introduced 31 Oct 2003 (Roles replaced rank etc) and dealt with settlements up to 2006.



CPD introduced in 2007 to replace long service increments.

How it currently works:

- The pay structure for 'Grey Book' staff is based upon the following roles: Firefighter, Crew Manager, Watch Manager, Stations Manager, Group Manager and Area Manager.
- Each of these roles has a 'development' or 'competent' pay point. There is local variation on the time it takes and the assessment about how you progress from one point to the next.
- Employees may only move up the pay structure through promotion into a higher role, there are no spinal pay points (unlike say, Green Book, police, teachers etc)
- Movement from development to competent is based on an individual completing a development programme.

	Basic annual £
Firefighter	
Development	30,384
Competent	38,881
Crew Manager	
Development	41,322
Competent	43,105
Watch Manager	
Development	44,038
Competent A	45,260
Competent B	48,202
Station Manager	
Development	50,135
Competent A	51,642
Competent B	55,301
Group Manager	
Development	57,743
Competent A	59,476
Competent B	64,013
Area Manager	
Development	67,792
Competent A	69,823
Competent B	74,360

FBU pay progression campaign

- In pay freeze/low pay award years, many other structures (including in local government) would have had some incremental progression in role or ability to move up spinal points (particularly when developing in role)
- Grey Book rates of pay are increased inline with the annual pay award – only.
- In “pay freeze years” or agreements of 1 or 2%, frustration among FBU members grew as the structure was less effective for protecting members against inflation (or cost of living).
- Following the industrial action ballot in 2022 and emergency NJC talks in early 2023, part of that agreement including a commitment to look at “pay progression”.

Pay offer letter 2022/2023

“The employers’ side of the NJC is content to continue discussions around pay structure and progression.

It is proposed that both parties commit to a joint working party commencing as soon as possible once the current pay award negotiations are concluded with the intention of the joint working party concluding its work within 8 months.”

On CPD: “The employers’ side notes the issues raised in the claim and is open to exploring further. Given the overlap with the pay progression point, it is proposed that consideration be incorporated into that proposed working party.”

A joint working group was established, and reported to the NJC.

Working group summary of consensus:

The lack of a nationally agreed, clear timetable underpinning the training and development of firefighters to reach “competent” and the lack of additional development thereafter,

Different approaches in FRSs,

Opportunities to develop the profile and standing of firefighting, being able to point to a highly skilled workforce with clear career development opportunities,

The need to attract and retain excellent firefighters

The current journey from trainee through to development, then onto competent,

The potential to add additional levels on top of “competent” rate of pay

Further discussion needed to agree what evidence would be required in order to allow movement into any new and additional band/bands?

A similar discussion would be required within each grey book role, including senior/supervisory grey book roles.

A developing position...

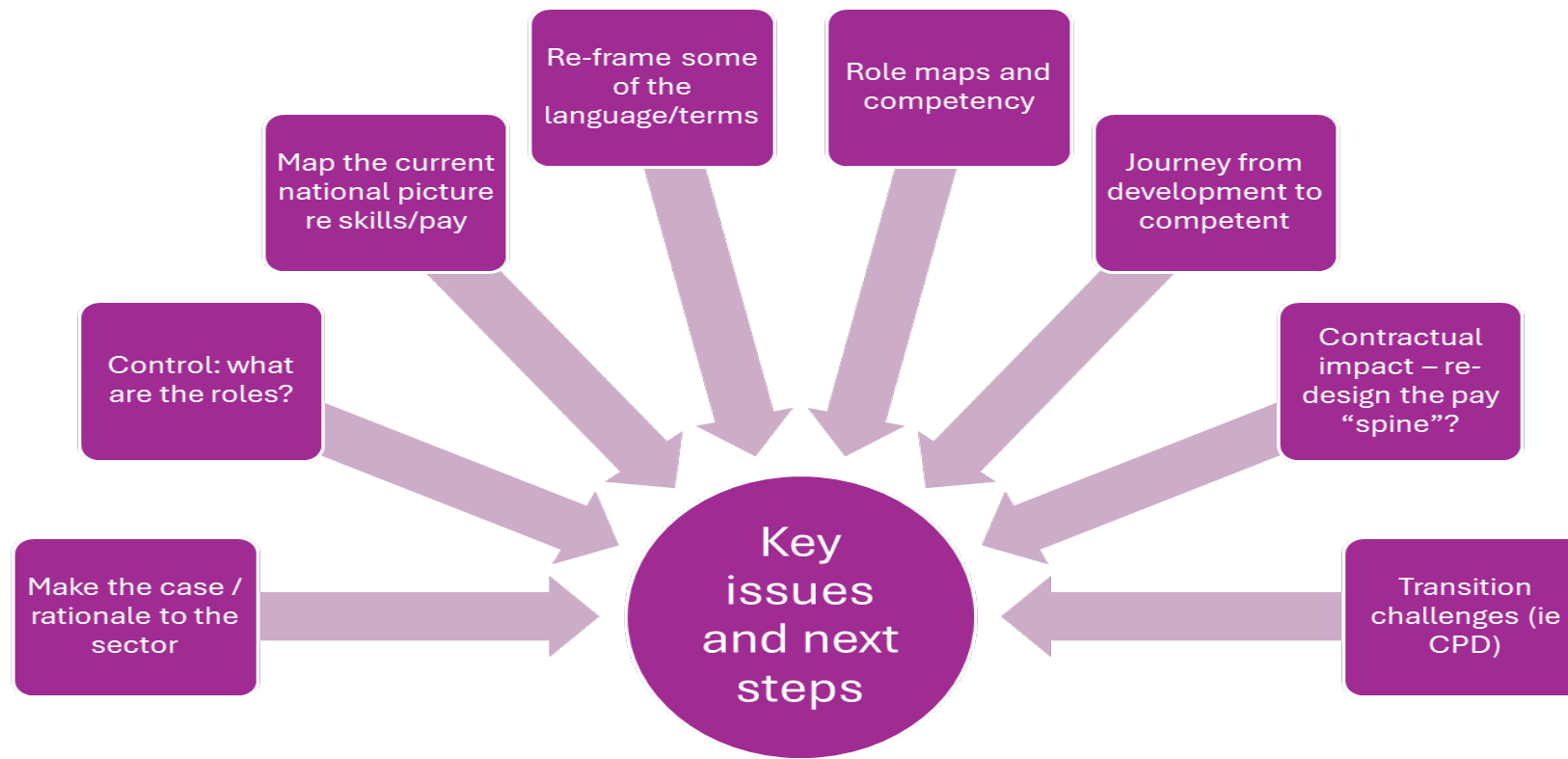
- National Employers and Advisory Forum discussions identified there were broader opportunities to achieve something more innovative,
- Sectoral consultation suggests CPD not delivering against original intention, can we do something different there?
- FBU engaged in broader dialogue, moving beyond “incremental progression” as a sole principle,
- Explore a UK wide consistent national journey from Development to Competent?
- Opportunity to look at consistency across sector, skills, career pathways – operational pathways as well as managerial pathways?
- Opportunity to move beyond local/national debates around “role map”,
- Opportunity to structure pay differently from dev to comp (rather than existing £8k pay uplift in one go – could be a more gradual journey?)
- Clarity of the stakeholder roles – this is a sector wider project,
- National Employers evolved language on their “vision” for the workforce...

Employers offer letter 2025:

"Our vision, aim and commitment

The National Employers remain clear that the national pay and grading structure should reflect the demand and role of Fire and Rescue Services in 2025, that the Grey Book pay and grading structure should underscore firefighting as a highly skilled occupation, rewarding skills and knowledge (not simply time served in role), driving professionalised leadership and management at all levels.

The culture of Fire and Rescue services needs to sit at the centre of any discussions around reform, ensuring there can be no doubt about the sort of attitudes and behaviours that our sector expects in 2025 and beyond.



Considerations

- Accreditation/transferable skills – is that achievable?
- Case for financial investment, working with MHCLG
- Embedding values and behaviours
- Understanding and developing the terminology of role of FF
- Flexibility for CRMP drivers – services need different things
- Golden thread for what’s the role, and how do we assess competence, career pathways etc
- Fairness and consistency
- Context of College of Fire and Rescue, and its potential role?
- Voice of workforce
- Timetable – big project, and pay negotiations come round fast

Context and stakeholders

- Future role of fire and rescue services – workforce element enables but not set by NJC (Employers conscious of this).
- Sustainability – fit for the future (accounting for new and emerging risks, flooding, wildfire etc)
- Enabling development for the role of FF (important enabler RDS recruitment and retention)
- Stakeholders and sectoral involvement – comms plan
- (Ministers/Govts, MAG, NFCC, specialist Leads, LGA, FRAs, FOA, FRSA, HMI)
- FBU - ultimately a negotiated agreement and ballot of FBU members.

Key points from Employers June meeting:

- “Be ambitious, but realistic”.
- Clearly understanding that not all services want the same thing, local CRMP is crucial,
- Ensure we can articulate benefits for both NJC sides throughout the process (and where it ends up) What does the sector want/need?
- Ensuring our work is evidence based,
- Can we deliver increased productivity and efficiency for FRSs?
- Enabling the workforce structures to fit the sector vision for Fire and Rescue services – NJC recognises it isn’t the other way (hence MAG, College of Fire and Rescue, NFCC etc)
- While we’re talking about future role of FF/FRSs, this isn’t just about that – it’s about skills/career paths too
- Ultimate aim is a more sustainable pay and grading structure “fit for the future”
- What can we learn from where these projects have failed in the past

Employers, secretariat, and Advisors recognise:

- This is a huge piece of work – but also a huge opportunity,
- Grey Book pay structure not reviewed for 20+ years,
- National Employers will provide regular direction and oversight, but operational leadership via Advisory Forum and NFCC link in driving the detail and supporting the NJC Secretariat,
- Alive to the need to keep sector informed and engaged,
- Clear this is a huge stakeholder engagement project too.

What happens next?



NJC Joint Secretaries shared project plan



Early presentations to get whole of sector into the same “start” square



Asking FRSs and FRAs to be conscious of these discussions when dealing with local agreements/negotiations, try to avoid precedent setting

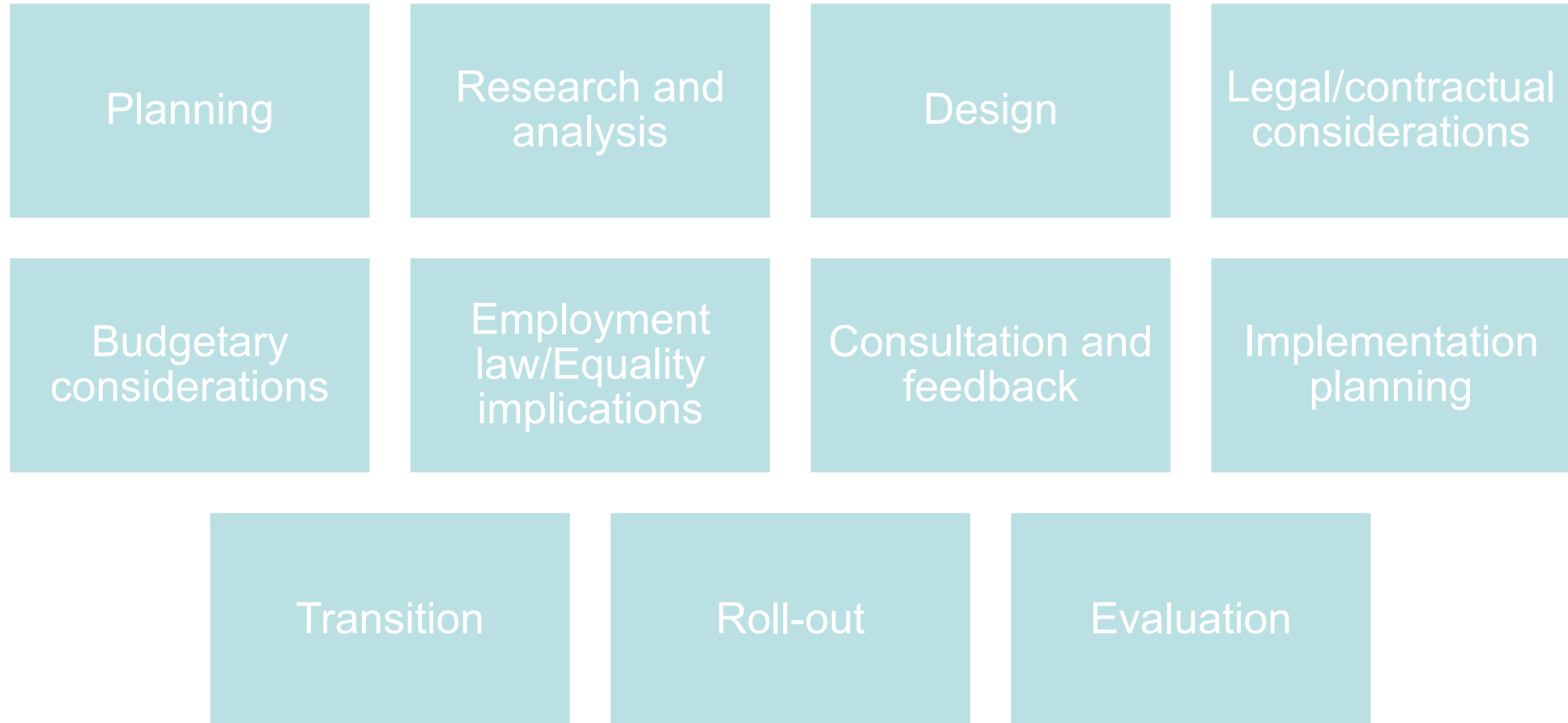


Pulling in the same direction on pay structure reform – establishing the employers side consensus



Focusing on the future – can we shape the future of our service?

Project plan overview



Thank you...

Will continue to update members.

Any questions or comments at this stage?