

PE2068/B: Review and cap public sector senior management salaries

Scottish Government response, 3 May 2024

As noted in our previous response, pay restraint for the highest paid, and targeted uplifts for the lowest paid have been key principles of the Scottish Government's approach to public sector pay for many years. These principles have been achieved in recent years through progressive pay awards that included, for example, capping pay increases for those earning more than £80,000, and most recently capping Chief Executive's annual pay increase at the same cash amount as the lowest paid. Job evaluation scores, and benchmarking against similar weighted roles typically support pay setting arrangements.

Many public sector staff earning over £100,000 are very highly qualified and experienced. This cohort can include NHS Consultants, Police Chief Constables, and Chief Executives who are directly accountable to parliament, tasked with leading public bodies and delivering quality services for Scotland under ever more difficult economic circumstances.

Where the Scottish Government have policy control, pay for public sector workers earning above £100,000 is restrained in various ways. There are a number of governance policies in place when recruiting senior posts to ensure that pay is matched to the level needed to recruit at the required calibre.

To undertake an independent review of all senior pay over £100,000 across the public sector would come at a significant cost, and the Scottish Government do not feel it would be a good use of public money to conduct an independent review at this time.

Public Sector Pay Policy Team