



British Broadcasting Corporation

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Information Rights

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Chris Morley
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29th February 2024

Dear Chris Morley,

Freedom of Information Request – RFI20240144

Thank you for your request to the BBC dated 5th February 2024 seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'):

- 1. How much funding was provided (or would be provided in a full year) to publishers per Local Democracy Reporter (LDR) job in that financial year;*
- 2. What is the contractual annual funding mechanism or calculation used for any uplift of funding per role;*
- 3. What were the minimum wages paid to an LDR in each of the financial years covered above;*
- 4. What data is available on how pay is distributed among the LDR cohort in those years;*
- 5. What is the breakdown by sex for filled LDR roles in those financial years;*
- 6. What monitoring of LDR pay by sex is carried out;*
- 7. Please give a detailed breakdown of any components this funding is expected to cover (e.g. salary, pension, IT equipment), and any exclusions;*
- 8. What data publishers are required to provide to the BBC to justify these funding allocations and any processes in place to review or challenge these decisions;*

9. *What happens to money which is unspent at the end of the financial year;*

10. *In the year 2023/24, how many LDR roles were carried out by trainees without an NQJ qualification;*

11. *What was the annual rate of turnover (in percentage terms and absolute numbers) of LDR personnel in each of the last five years (including that incorporating 2023/4)?*

In response to part one of your request, the table below shows the funding provided for Local Democracy Reporter (LDR) posts during each of the past four full financial years. Please be advised that the first LDR positions were filled in January 2018, and so 2018/19 is the first full financial year for which we hold this data.

Year	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Maximum funding per filled LDR post	£34,509	£35,027	£35,553	£36,627	£37,177
Maximum London funding per filled LDR post	£36,540	£37,088	£37,644	£38,782	£39,364

Please note that the funding values shown here represent the maximum level of funding provided for each full-time equivalent (FTE) LDR position. Further to this, it should be noted that LDRS supplier organisations do not receive any funding for periods when a post is vacant, and the level of funding throughout a given year is adjusted accordingly. For example, if an LDR post was vacant for 10% of a year, funding would be reduced by 10%.

In response to part two of your request, the annual uplift for each LDR contract is 1.5% in each financial year.

In response to part 3 of your request, LDR supplier organisations are required to pay a minimum salary for LDR positions, as stipulated by the BBC (unless the BBC stipulated salary is lower than the supplier's own minimum salary level, in which case that value will apply). There is no maximum salary limit for LDR positions.

Currently, the BBC stipulated FTE minimum salaries for LDR positions are as follows:

- Senior Reporter outside London: £24,055.74
- Senior Reporter inside London: £26,242.63
- Junior LD Reporter in possession of a 'Gold standard' NCTJ Diploma in Journalism: £18,028.94 (or £20,089.38 if in London)
- Junior LD Reporter working towards a 'Gold standard' NCTJ Diploma in Journalism: £16,998.71 (or £19,059.16 if in London)

In response to part four of your requests, following successful recruitment, contract holders must supply the BBC with a copy of an LDR's Contract of Employment to ensure contractual salary requirements are met. We are not in a position to state how 'pay is distributed' to individual LDRs. The distribution of pay is a matter for the contract holders.

In response to part five of your request, the LNP management team monitors the gender split of the LDRS cohort in an annual Diversity Survey of reporters. Responses from 2018-2023 were as follows:

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Male	52	68	72	59	75	75
Female	24	23	37	33	40	29
Prefer not to say			2	2	1	3
Non-binary						1

None						1
Other						1

In response to part six of your request, we do not monitor LDR pay by gender.

In response to part seven of your request, the funding is expected to cover the following components - employment costs, including but not limited to salary, pension, NI, training and equipment.

With regards to part 8 of your request, please be advised that the funding levels per LDR post were set by the BBC in advance of the supplier tender process. Suppliers entered a competitive procurement process to apply for contracts to host LDRs in the available contract areas. There was no price competition. Following award, each LDR Contract is assessed by the BBC on an rolling basis against a series of performance targets.

In response to part 9 of your request, the BBC's commitment is to provide the agreed level of maximum funding for each filled LDR post. If a post is vacant for any period of time funding is not provided. In event of a Supplier's annual LDR employment costs exceeding the agreed funding, no additional funding is provided by the BBC. Where a supplier's annual LDR employment costs are less than the agreed funding, the difference is retained by the Supplier. However, as stated above, contract holders are required to pay each LDR a salary that is at least at the level of minimum salary set by the BBC and cover all other costs related to the recruitment, employment, equipping, managing and supporting the postholder. Any agreed funding not passed to a supplier during periods of LDR vacancy (see further information above) is retained by the BBC.

In response to part 10 of your request, in 23/24 12 LDRs were working toward a National Qualification in Journalism (NOJ).

In response to part 11 of your request, the percentage numbers of LDR leavers by year were as follows:

**it is difficult to be precise as not all posts are filled at any one time*
*** figures for 2019-20 are best endeavours figure*

Year	Posts available	Average vacant posts	Number of leavers	Notes	Leavers as % of total posts
2019-2020	150	22	15		10%
2020-2021	150	15	24		16%
2021-2022	150	22	62		41%
2022-2023	150 until end May 2022			New contract started on 1 st June 2022	
2022-2023	165 from 1 st June	17	46		28%
2023-24	165	11	51	As at Feb 2024	31%

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied that we have complied with the FOI Act in responding to your request, you have the right to request an internal review by a BBC lawyer who did not issue the response. Please contact us at the address above, explaining what you would like us to review and include your reference number. A request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of receiving the BBC's response to your original request.

If you are not satisfied with the internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner. The contact details are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, Tel: 0303 123 1113 or see <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

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