

A question of pay for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

27 January 2024



Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's annual allowances paid to its elected Councillors has long been lower than all other 10 Surrey Boroughs. Currently standing at the basic allowance of £4031.70 this compares with the highest paid in Guildford of £8348. EEBC is the smallest borough in the County both in size and population.

On Thursday 25th January the councillors serving on the Strategy and Resources Committee (S&R) of EEBC voted to increase the basic allowance for all councillors by 29% to an annual sum of £5736.90 (plus 6%). The committee's recommendation goes to the Full Council.

The printed decision of the meeting refers to the approval of the recommendation known as "option B" that gives the annual figure of £5736.90. The vote taken at the meeting was "option B plus 6%".

Cllr **Robert Leach** (RA Nonsuch) said that for the average number of hours of 15 per week that Councillors devoted to Council business meant that they were the lowest paid of all Council "employees". That the allowances had increased in the last 10 years at an average of 2.1% per annum. Cllr Leach proposed "option B plus 6%".

Cllr **Alison Kelly** (LibDem Stamford) spoke in favour of option B on the basis that the Council needed to attract a diverse range of people to stand as Councillors.

Subject to other Borough's increasing allowances paid to their members for 2024/2025 the league table of allowances now looks like this:

Council	Allowances
Tandridge District Council	£4,446.00
Mole Valley District Council	£4,793.01
Runnymede Borough Council	£5,500.00
Elmbridge Borough Council	£5,512.00
Waverley Borough Council	£5,609.10
Surrey Heath Borough Council	£5,711.00
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council option B	£5,736.90
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	£5,956.00
Spelthorne Borough Council	£6,531.00
Woking Borough Council	£7,380.00
Guildford Borough Council	£8,348.00

Other increases were recommended for the chairs and vice-chairs of some of the Council's committees.

At the same meeting the 6% increase for Council workers for 2024/2025 was confirmed with the following observations being made in an officer's report to the committee:

The Government has confirmed that the national living wage will rise from £10.42 to £11.44 from April 2024. This represents an increase of 9.8% and it is acknowledged that this is significantly greater than the 6% increase which will be applied to our pay scales from April 2024.

There is currently no formal commitment within our Pay Policy to pay the Voluntary Living Wage (vLW) promoted by the Living Wage Foundation as the minimum hourly rate at which an employee should be paid. The 2024/25 vLW rate for outside of London is £12.00 per hour. This represents a 10% increase on the 2023/24 vLW rate of £10.90.

The bottom of EEBC's lowest pay scale is £21,734 and the top of the Chief Executive scale is £151,979. This is a pay multiple of 1:7. These figures are based on pay scales and not actual salaries.

As at 30 November 2023 the mean average pay for employees other than Chief Officers was £36,177; therefore currently

the ratio of mean average Chief Officer pay to mean average pay of other employees was 1:2.9.

The Chief Executive Officer and Directors remuneration was also considered and a 6 % increase recommended:

Post	2023/24: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2024/25: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2023/24: Top of salary range (£ per annum)	2024/25: Top of salary range (£ per annum)
Chief Executive	£126,072	£131,016	£143,376	£151,979
Director	£89,677	£93,156	£103,135	£109,323

In addition to the basic salary the CEO and Directors may receive the following additional benefits:

*Payment into the pension scheme if the employee has opted in and pays into the required employee contribution rate. The employer's contribution is currently 17.4% of pensionable pay, with the next actuarial valuation due 31 March 2026.

*Chief Executive and Director monthly allowance of 4% of basic salary in respect of subsistence and other expenses, thereby reducing administration and providing a cap on the cost.

*Payment of up to two annual subscriptions to professional institutions where this is an essential requirement of the role. Costs of memberships vary but most are around £200.

*Allowance for the requirement to have a car for the effective performance of duties. The amount varies according to the role of the individual.

Any CEO or Director fulfilling the role of Returning Officer at elections receives additional pay depending on whether an election is contested and the number of electors involved.

Related reports:

Council staff to get 6% pay increase?

County CEO's pay rise triggering strikes?

Pay rises for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council