

# Guildford Council’s CEO’s salary touches the UK Prime Minister’s



Guildford and Waverley Borough Council’s chief executive’s new salary will be £169,950 after a three per cent pay rise was agreed – despite the likelihood the two councils will soon be dissolved as part of local government reorganisation.

[The annual salary for a UK Prime Minister is £172,153, which includes £80,807 for the role of Prime Minister and an additional £91,346 for being an MP.]

Pedro Wrobel was appointed as the new joint chief executive in 2024, having previously been Westminster City Council’s executive director for innovation and change. He replaced former boss Tom Horwood, who said he was standing down from the then £150,000 job due to health concerns.

Other options that had been on the table at the Thursday, July 31 Guildford and Waverley Joint Senior Staff Committee included a 3.2 per cent bump, welcomed by the Union for Local Authorities CEO’s and Senior Managers, as well as a bumper one-off £25,500 lump sum that would have ramped the position’s salary up to £185,000. The council said this would have brought the role in line with similar shared CEO roles such as Broadland District and South Norfolk, as well as Boston Borough, East Lindsey District, and South Holland District.

In the end, the committee took all of two minutes to agree on a three per cent rise — the equivalent of an extra £4,950 a year. The union UNISON has already agreed a three per cent award for Waverley Borough Council employees. No agreement for Guildford Borough Council employees has been agreed.

A spokesperson for Waverley Borough Council said: “This decision aligns with the pay award agreed with UNISON for Waverley Borough Council employees, and the councils’ Joint Leadership Team. Maintaining a competitive remuneration package is essential to attract and retain high-calibre leadership. The benchmarking data shows that many councils with similar or even smaller populations and fewer employees offer higher salaries. A modest increase helps to ensure the council remains competitive in a challenging recruitment market.”

Mr Wrobel’s new salary is among the highest received by council bosses in the Southeast and Surrey – although on a per head of population basis it is the lowest among similar councils with a joint role. This, the council argues, reflects the significant scale and complexity of the Guildford and Waverley job – with a combined population of more than 270,000 and responsibility for a workforce of more than 1,100 employees and 100 borough councillors.

The councils rejected the 3.2 per cent offer as it would have created inconsistency with the rest of the leadership team. While the one-off uplift to £185,000 would have represented a 12 per cent increase, significantly above local and national pay trends, it was therefore considered inappropriate and difficult to justify financially at this time.

## Epsom and Ewell Times adds:

### Chief Executive Salaries - Surrey Councils

*Figures are the most recently published base salaries or salary bands. Some councils report ranges, others exact figures, and a few include allowances or car benefits.*

| Council               | Chief Executive Salary (approx)     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Surrey County Council | £234,600 (former CEO)               |
| Guildford & Waverley  | £169,950                            |
| Epsom & Ewell         | £131,000 – £152,000 + 4% allowance  |
| Mole Valley           | £122,000 – £136,000                 |
| Elmbridge             | Up to £140,000+ (approval required) |
| Reigate & Banstead    | £137,500 – £144,500                 |
| Runnymede             | £100,000+ (not specified)           |
| Spelthorne            | Up to £131,000                      |
| Surrey Heath          | £136,800 + £2,000 car allowance     |
| Tandridge             | £122,000 – £138,000 (grade range)   |
| Woking                | Not disclosed                       |

New CEO Pedro Wrobel (image GBC) and UK PM Starmer