

Town Hall Rich List 2023

April 2023



Introduction

Town Hall Rich List 2023 marks the 16th version of this research, first compiled in 2007. For the past 16 years the TaxPayers' Alliance has assembled the most comprehensive list of council employees in the UK in receipt of over £100,000 in total remuneration in a single financial year.

For the average (band D) property in England, council tax will rise by 5.1 per cent, or an extra £99, in 2023-24.¹ In Wales it will increase by 5.8 per cent.² Most Scottish local authorities have announced a rise of around 5 per cent, within a range of between 3.9 and 10 per cent.³

There has been a significant increase in the number of local authorities failing to publish their annual statement of accounts for 2021-22. The statutory deadline for publishing draft local authority accounts for 2021-22 was the 31 July 2022. Currently 47 local authorities have failed to publish even draft unaudited accounts for 2021-22. This compares to 25 local authorities who had failed to publish their accounts at the same date in 2022, a serious year on year deterioration. A table of the councils failing to publish their annual report and accounts is set out in Appendix 1.

It means that over 11.8 per cent of local authorities failed to provide the financial information needed to allow taxpayers to judge whether or not they get value for money.

Key findings

For local authorities in the year 2021-22

- At least 2,759 employees received more than £100,000 in total remuneration, of which 721 received £150,000 or more.
- Based on the proportion of local authorities failing to disclose details of their highly paid employees, it is reasonable to conclude that the likely total of employees earning over £100,000 would be 3,126 and 818 over £150,000.
- The average number of employees who received £100,000 or more in total remuneration was 7.9 per local authority. The average number receiving £150,000 or more was 2.1 employees per local authority.
- Westminster was the local authority with the greatest number of employees receiving total remuneration of over £100,000 with 50 employees.
- The highest remunerated council employee was the managing director of Guildford council, receiving £607,633 in total remuneration. This included pension contributions of £339,158, £154,240 compensation for loss of office, a salary of £107,195 and £5,688 in benefits.
- The local authority to pay out the highest amount in terms of bonuses and performance related pay to a senior employee was Newcastle upon Tyne council, with their director of public health receiving a £36,192 bonus.

¹ Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, *Council Tax levels set by local authorities: England 2023-24*, 23 March 2023.

² StatsWales, *Annual increase in average band D council tax, by billing authority*, stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Council-Tax/Levels/annualpercentageincreaseinaveragebanddcounciltax-by-billingauthority, (accessed 31 March 2023).

³ The Scotsman, *Scottish Council Tax Rises: Here are the 10 most expensive Band D council tax rates in Scotland – from Edinburgh to South Ayrshire*, 14 March 2023, (accessed 31 March 2023).

Highest remunerated local authority employees

Table 1: 20 highest remunerated employees in 2021-22

Council	Name	Job title	Remuneration (£)
Guildford	Not disclosed	Managing director	607,633
Sunderland	Not disclosed	Executive director of neighbourhoods	573,550
North Lanarkshire	Robert Steenson	Executive director (enterprise and communities)	536,530
Southampton	Sandy Hopkins	Chief executive	406,403
Ealing	P Najsarek	Chief executive	325,047
Wyre Forest	Not disclosed	Corporate director: economic prosperity and place	286,230
Bristol, City of	D Graham	Director: homes and landlord services (interim)	280,634
Northumberland	Daljit Lally	Chief executive	279,937
Wyre Forest	Not disclosed	Corporate director: resources	279,482
Westminster	S Love	Chief executive	276,962
Hillingdon	F Beasley	Outgoing chief executive and corporate director	263,102
Hounslow	Niall Bolger	Chief executive	262,511
Glasgow City	Annemarie O'Donnell	Chief executive	260,999
Sunderland	Peter McIntyre	Executive director of city development	259,854
Barnet	John Hooton	Chief executive (head of paid service)	259,718
Essex	Gavin Jones	Chief executive	254,453
Kent	David Cockburn	Corporate director strategic & corporate services	251,955
Manchester	Joanne Roney	Chief executive	250,727
Luton	Robin Porter	Chief executive	250,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	Kim Smith	Chief executive	247,850

Table 2: 10 employees receiving the highest expenses in 2021-22

Council	Name	Job title	Expenses (£)
Northumberland	Daljit Lally	Chief executive and head of paid service	40,000
Glasgow City	Annemarie O'Donnell	Chief executive	36,562
Barnet	Geoff Mee	Executive director of environment	27,189
Staffordshire Moorlands	Not disclosed	Chief executive officer	21,584
South Kesteven	Not disclosed	Chief executive	19,000
Hounslow	Niall Bolger	Chief executive	18,200
Gateshead	S Ramsey	Chief executive	14,842
Runnymede	Not disclosed	Chief executive	14,719
Cheltenham	Not disclosed	Executive director: finance and assets	14,604
Kent	Ben Watts	General counsel	14,475

Table 3: 10 highest employee bonus amounts received in 2021-22

Council	Name	Job title	Bonus (£)
Newcastle upon Tyne	Not disclosed	Director of public health	36,192
Hambleton	Dr Justin Ives	Chief executive	26,535
Edinburgh	N Serafini	Managing director (interim) - Lothian buses	26,100
Hambleton	Mick Jewitt	Deputy chief executive	21,935
Edinburgh	L Harrison	Managing director - Edinburgh trams	16,000
Hambleton	Not disclosed	Director of law and governance - monitoring officer	13,283
Hambleton	Not disclosed	Director of leisure & communities	13,283
Brentwood	Not disclosed	Chief executive	12,500
Wokingham	Not disclosed	Director resources: & assets and deputy chief executive	12,000
Hambleton	Not disclosed	Director of environment	11,385

Table 4: 10 highest compensation pay-outs received for loss of office in 2021-22

Council	Name	Job title	Compensation for loss of office (£)
Chelmsford	A Fahey	Director: financial services	211,960
Southampton	Sandy Hopkins	Chief executive	188,239
Guildford	Not disclosed	Managing director	154,240
Shropshire	Not disclosed	Executive director of children's services	117,589
South Kesteven	Not disclosed	Strategic director	115,000
North Lanarkshire	Robert Steenson	Executive director (enterprise and communities)	100,479
Stoke-on-Trent	Not disclosed	Director - children & family services	99,657
Shropshire	Not disclosed	Director of legal & democratic services (monitoring officer)	97,840
Ealing	P Najsarek	Chief executive	94,859
Greenwich	K Delaney	Director of communities and environment (deputy chief executive)	93,800

Regional comparisons and highlights

Chart 1: number of council employees by region receiving more than £100,000 total remuneration in 2021-22

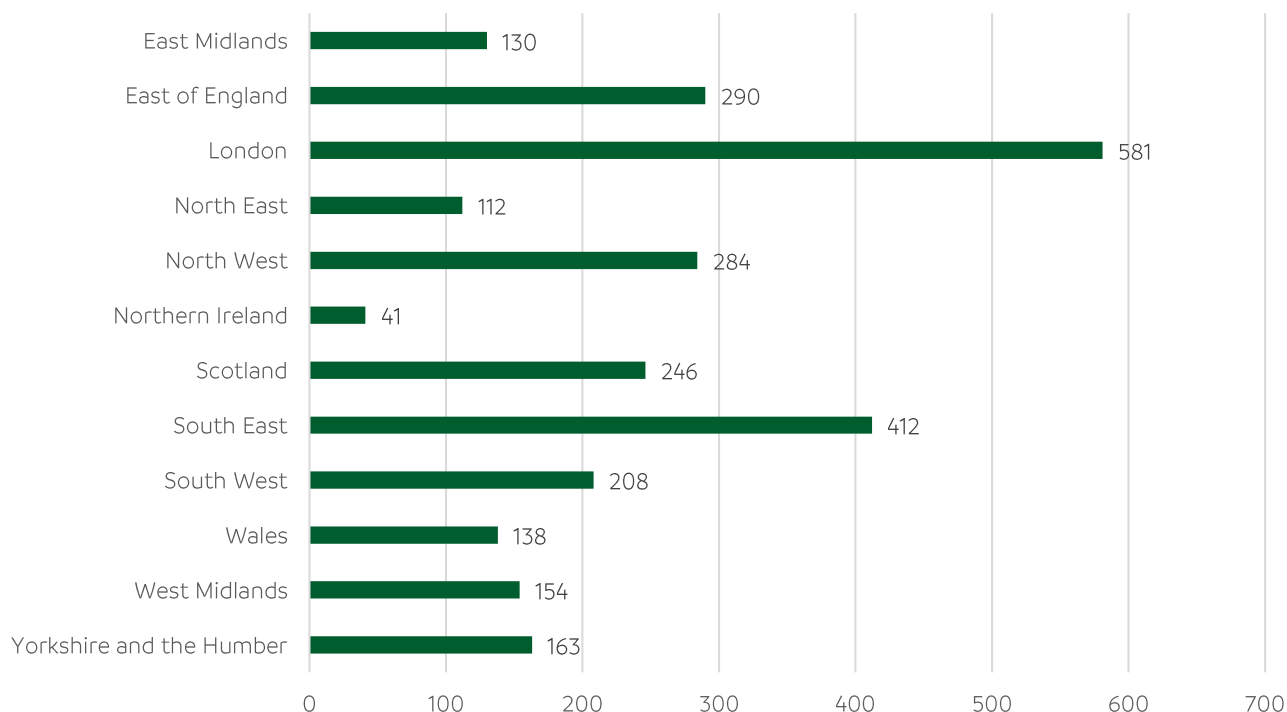


Table 5: highest remunerated employees by region in 2021-22

Region	Council	Job title	Remuneration (£)
South East	Guildford	Managing director	607,633
North East	Sunderland	Executive director of neighbourhoods	573,550
Scotland	North Lanarkshire	Executive director (enterprise and communities)	536,530
London	Ealing	Chief executive	325,047
West Midlands	Wyre Forest	Corporate director: economic prosperity and place	286,230
South West	Bristol, City of	Director homes and landlord services (interim)	280,634
East of England	Essex	Chief executive	254,453
North West	Manchester	Chief executive	250,727
Yorkshire and the Humber	Sheffield	Chief executive	243,130
East Midlands	South Kesteven	Strategic director	237,000
Wales	Cardiff	Chief executive	227,116
Northern Ireland	Newry, Mourne and Down	Clerk & chief executive	152,463

Table 6: 10 local authorities with the most employees receiving remuneration over £100,000 in 2021-22

Council	Region	Employees
Westminster	London	50
Essex	East of England	45
Haringey	London	44
Islington	London	36
Lambeth	London	35
Greenwich	London	35
Waltham Forest	London	35
Newham	London	34
Hackney	London	34
Hampshire	South East	33

Table 7: local authorities by region with most employees on remuneration over £100,000 in 2021-22

Region	Council	Employees
London	Westminster	50
East of England	Essex	45
South East	Hampshire	33
Scotland	City of Edinburgh	23
North East	Northumberland	23
North West	Manchester	23
South West	Dorset	23
Yorkshire and the Humber	East Riding of Yorkshire	23
West Midlands	Staffordshire	22
Wales	Cardiff	17
East Midlands	Lincolnshire	14
Northern Ireland	Belfast	9

[Check out the full data tables by clicking here](#)

Methodology

Total remuneration includes, but is not limited to, salary, employer's pension contributions, benefits in kind, expenses, bonuses and redundancy payments.

Methods of reporting the pay of the highest remunerated employees in local authorities vary significantly. Measures taken to allow for this mean that the figure of 2,759 council employees receiving over £100,000 is likely to be an understatement.

Of the 398 current local authorities who should have filed accounts for 2021-22, 47 had not even published draft accounts by 11 April 2023. This represented 11.8 per cent of all local authorities. Had all authorities published their accounts as required, on a pro-rata basis, it is reasonable to conclude that the actual number of employees receiving over £100,000 or £150,000 would have been approximately 13.3 per cent higher than detailed in this report.

- As well as a detailed remuneration report for senior staff, English and Scottish councils publish a headcount of all members of staff on a salary in excess of £50,000 (£60,000 in Wales) in £5,000 bands. For some councils, this could include teachers. Where a council explicitly states that their pay bands summary includes both teachers and council staff without specifying the breakdown, then their pay band figures have been excluded. Therefore, some high paid, non-teaching staff may have been excluded from the totals. Where councils do not explicitly state if their pay bands include teachers, then their pay band figures have been included.
- Some local authorities have not indicated whether those listed in the senior staff remuneration breakdown are in addition to or separate from those in the remuneration bands. In these instances, the senior staff breakdown is closely compared to the pay bands summary in order to establish what data it is appropriate to include.
- The figures in council salary bands rarely include employer pension contributions. Consequently, many non-senior members of staff in the headcount are reported as receiving salaries between £90,000 and £99,999, but their total remuneration is likely to exceed £100,000 when employers' pension contributions (between 14 and 18 per cent on average⁴) are added. Therefore, the total number of employees receiving over £100,000 in total remuneration is likely to be understated.
- In Scotland, pension contributions are listed separately from employees' other total remuneration. Consequently, total remuneration excluding pension contributions have been collated with the actual pension contributions to calculate total remuneration.
- In Northern Ireland, the pension figures shown are equivalent to 19.5 per cent of the employee's salary, in line with what each Northern Irish local authority contributes to the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee scheme. A two per cent deficit reduction contribution is also made by employers to the scheme.
- Each entry refers to an individual not a position.
- School and police staff have been excluded from the survey wherever possible.
- Where only salary bands are provided, the midpoint has been used.
- Local authorities in England and Wales are only required to provide names for those with a salary of £150,000 or more (Scottish councils publish the names of all senior employees). Some local authorities have opted to name all their senior staff irrespective of whether their salaries are above £150,000.

⁴ UNISON, *Local Government Pension Scheme: an introduction*, 2020, www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/pensions/local-government-pension-scheme/, (accessed 28 March 2023).
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- Employees of council-owned subsidiaries have been included, because they are detailed in either the draft or audited financial statements. These subsidiary employees have been included when receiving over £100,000 in total remuneration.
- Where senior staff are shared between authorities, the individual and their full remuneration has been entered into only one council.
- Some local authorities do not correct for rounding differences in their remuneration schedules. In these circumstances we have adjusted total remuneration to reflect the total of the individual elements of an employee's pay. Similarly, if because of error, an employee's total remuneration does not agree the total of the individual elements, the same method has been applied.

Appendix 1

Local authorities failing to file their annual statement of accounts for 2021-22 by 11 April 2023

Council	Region
Barking and Dagenham	London
Blackpool	North West
Bromley	London
Bromsgrove	West Midlands
Buckinghamshire	South East
Camden	London
Cannock Chase	West Midlands
City of London	London
Colchester	East of England
Copeland	North West
Coventry	West Midlands
Craven	Yorkshire and the Humber
Croydon	London
Dover	South East
East Devon	South West
East Hertfordshire	East of England
Gloucester	South West
Gravesham	South East
Great Yarmouth	East of England
Hyndburn	North West
Lewes	South East
Medway	South East
North Norfolk	East of England
North Northamptonshire	East Midlands
North Warwickshire	West Midlands
North West Leicestershire	East Midlands
Nottingham	East Midlands
Reading	South East
Redditch	West Midlands
Reigate and Banstead	South East
Rossendale	North West
Sandwell	West Midlands

Council	Region
Slough	South East
South Cambridgeshire	East of England
St Albans	East of England
Stafford	West Midlands
Stratford-on-Avon	West Midlands
Surrey Heath	South East
Tandridge	South East
Thanet	South East
Thurrock	East of England
Tower Hamlets	London
Uttlesford	East of England
West Northamptonshire	East Midlands
Wiltshire	South West
Woking	South East
Worcester	West Midlands