# Council leaders award themselves hefty pay rises amidst rising council tax



The Daily Record highlights a deeply troubling situation following substantial pay raises awarded to council leaders in Scotland, starkly contrasting against the backdrop of record increases in council tax. This development has ignited fierce criticism regarding the appropriateness of such increases amid soaring living costs and stagnant wages that continue to squeeze ordinary families.

On the very day Falkirk Council approved a staggering 15.6 percent rise in council tax, Glasgow and Edinburgh swiftly followed with their own exorbitant tax hikes of 7.5 percent and 8 percent, respectively. Clackmannanshire and East Dunbartonshire also jumped on the bandwagon with 13 percent increases. This onslaught of financial demands comes at a time when households are already grappling with skyrocketing rents, burdensome water charges, and surging energy costs, forcing hard-working citizens to face annual expenses spiraling by hundreds of pounds.

This unbearable financial strain is compounded by wage increases for many workers that frequently lag behind inflation. For instance, council workers in Scotland are now contemplating strike action after being offered a meager three percent wage rise—a clear reflection of the growing discontent over fair compensation amidst pressures on their livelihoods.

In an outrageous display of prioritizing personal gain, council leaders have awarded themselves substantial pay increases while their constituents struggle. Edinburgh’s leader, Jane Meagher, and Glasgow’s leader, Susan Aitken, will receive a 12 percent salary bump, pushing their annual pay to a staggering £71,519. Meanwhile, in Falkirk, council leader Cecil Meiklejohn will benefit from a 17 percent increase, resulting in a salary of £50,063. To add insult to injury, Orkney’s leader, Heather Woodbridge, is set to flaunt a jaw-dropping 41 percent raise, bringing her pay to the same £50,063, while families suffer under the weight of taxation.

This disturbing juxtaposition of lavish pay increases for council figures against the mounting financial challenges faced by everyday citizens reveals a troubling trend of elected officials seemingly prioritizing their own financial gain over the welfare of the communities they represent. Critics are right to argue that such actions only serve to deepen public skepticism about the motivations of politicians, especially in an environment where essential services appear to decline and families are battling relentless increases in living costs.

The conversation surrounding the remuneration of local politicians is now more urgent than ever, as many have historically regarded the role of councillor as a part-time position laden with heavy responsibility. While the importance of fair compensation to encourage civic engagement cannot be ignored, the current scenario raises serious questions about public accountability and value in local governance. The electorate deserves a leadership that places their needs ahead of personal financial interests—something that has been sorely lacking in this recent display of prioritization.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-bands> - This page provides details on the 2025/2026 Council Tax bands for Edinburgh, including the 8% increase across all bands. It also lists the charges for each band, which corroborates the information about tax hikes in Scotland.
* <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/budgets-spending-and-performance/council-tax-increase-2025-2026-faq> - This FAQ page discusses Falkirk Council's 15.61% increase in Council Tax for 2025/2026, highlighting the need for significant increases to balance the budget and protect essential services. It supports the claim about substantial tax hikes in Falkirk.
* <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2025/03/council-tax-increase-2025-2026/> - This article outlines the general increase in Council Tax across the UK, with specific mentions of Scotland's hikes ranging from 7% to over 13%. It corroborates the widespread nature of Council Tax increases in Scotland.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the source article itself, providing context and details about the situation with council pay raises and tax hikes in Scotland.
* <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=23859> - This Glasgow City Council page might provide information on council tax and budgeting decisions, potentially supporting claims about Glasgow's tax hikes and council leaders' pay increases.