



EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Council Tax and Budget Information 2026-2027

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service is not alone in facing pressure on its budget due to increases in costs and reductions in funding from government over its new three year funding settlement.

By law, East Sussex Fire Authority must approve a balanced budget each year.

The Fire Authority has agreed an increase in Council Tax of £5 at Band D, the maximum allowed without a referendum, in order to help navigate these pressures and maintain our essential services to the community. That is an increase of just 10 pence per week.

Fire Authority Chair Amanda Evans said:

“The Fire Authority does not take the decision to increase council tax lightly. Increased costs and reduced government funding over the next three years mean there are limited ways to balance the budget while continuing to deliver our community offer, and council tax remains our primary source of funding. Despite these financial pressures, the Fire Authority continues to place the highest priority on reducing risk and saving lives.”

Support will continue to be available through local Council Tax Support Schemes for those residents who are eligible.



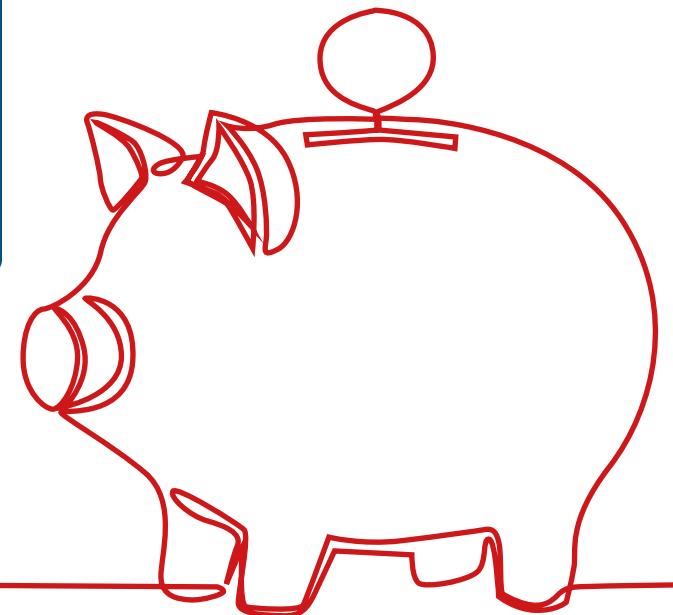
What you pay for fire and rescue - council tax bands

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Annual Cost	£78.33	£91.38	£104.44	£117.49	£143.60	£169.71	£195.82	£234.98
Weekly Cost	£1.51	£1.76	£2.01	£2.26	£2.76	£3.26	£3.77	£4.52

Sound Financial Management

In its most recent report, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services rated East Sussex

Fire & Rescue as good at making best use of resources and making the FRS affordable now and in the future.





Budget gap

The 2026/27 budget will be balanced by delivering new savings of £2.2m. We will need to make further savings, bringing the total to £3.2m, to balance the budget over the rest of the three year settlement.

Our plans for the future

(our revenue budget)

Our revenue budget (for day-to-day spending) will increase overall by £2.7m, mainly due to inflationary pressures (£1.8m), commitments (£3.1m) which have been offset by savings (£2.2m).

What we spend:	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	% of budget	How we are funded:	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	Proportion %
Employees	38.6	39.6	74%	Government Grants	5.7	9.3	17%
Running Expenses	14.0	13.0	24%	Business rates	10.5	7.6	14%
Capital Financing	1.2	1.0	2%	Council tax	34.6	36.7	69%
Gross Service Expenditure	53.7	53.6	100%	Total Funding	50.9	53.6	100%
Income & Specific Grants	-2.9	-2.7	-5%				
Contribution to/(from) Reserves*	0.0	2.7	0%				
Net Budget Requirement	50.9	53.6	100%				

*The contribution to reserves is the net figure of all reserve transfers

Investing for the future

(our capital budget)

As well as our day to day spending, in 2026/27 we will be investing £7.1m in our assets, including: £1.6m on new fire appliances, other vehicles and equipment and £4.9m in improving our buildings. The investment in our estate includes mitigating the risk of contaminants, improvements to reduce energy consumption and the provision of welfare facilities. Major projects include refurbishments of The Ridge, Seaford and Barcombe Fire Stations and improvements to our training facilities. We expect this investment, and other measures will reduce the day to day running costs of our Estate.

Income from the community infrastructure levy fund (CIL), along with other money we have and are planning to put aside, are funding some of the Capital Asset Strategy, but we expect to have to also take out new borrowing of £4.3m.

We hold some reserves to fund planned investments and also in case of unexpected costs. These will reduce from £8m to £5.4m during the coming year, meaning we will have less financial flexibility.

