



Hampshire County Council has approved a council tax precept for the coming financial year which will still remain one of the lowest in the Country – while at the same time investing over £500 million into the County’s infrastructure and local economy.

Full Council recently approved recommendations to balance the budget for 2017/18 – prioritising funding for vulnerable children and adults, and on track to deliver £98 million of savings, as set out in proposals agreed in 2015. The County Council spends around £1.9 billion per annum on serving Hampshire’s 1.3 million residents and ever since national austerity measures began in 2008, we have applied a two-year financial planning strategy. This involves delivering significant savings early, and reinvesting them into more modern and efficient ways of working, while making careful use of reserves to meet gaps in funding, to protect services as far as possible. To date, this approach has served Hampshire well and we have delivered £340 million in savings, in total, so far. We have kept Council Tax the lowest of all County Councils nationally, and up to last year, we had frozen Council Tax at the same level for five years.

Unfortunately, over the next two years, the funding picture gets no better, and by April 2019, we will need to find a further £140 million in savings to balance our budget, on top of the £340 million we have already saved. Meanwhile, demand continues to go up in areas such as social care, especially for Hampshire’s growing older population and Government now expects Councils to increase Council Tax by a maximum of 6%, over the next three years, to specifically address these social care pressures.

In Hampshire, we propose to accept the Government’s invitation – but bring forward the 6% increase over a two-year period instead. This will enable us to use the money prudently, upfront on a one-off basis, and help offset the major pressures we know are coming our way, especially in adult social care. This will mean that for 2017/18, there will be a 3% increase in the County Council’s Council Tax precept to address the adult social care funding pressures, plus a 1.99% general increase, representing a 4.99% increase overall. This will mean that for the year beginning 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, at Band D, an extra £1 per week. At the present time we provide long-term support to over 20,000 residents, but the money generated will still not be enough to deal with the expected increases in demand for social care over the next few years.

### **News in a Nutshell**

- An extra £10 million a year has been put into ensuring our road network is more resilient to the impact of heavy traffic and weather. Hampshire’s highways teams repair around 10,000 potholes each year but has one of the lowest pothole compensation claim rates per mile of road amongst all our neighbouring county councils in the South East.
- On top of this, around £1.5million is being invested, this year, improving drainage under the roads so heavy and intense rainfall can drain away quicker.
- Over 97% of Hampshire’s 16 and 17 year olds secured a further education or training placement for the start of the 2016/17 academic year - making Hampshire County Council one of the best performing authorities in the Country at supporting young people to stay in education.
- The County is to fund capital projects, include creating 10,915 new primary and secondary school places.
- Hampshire’s Supporting Troubled Families Programme has attracted the interest of the United States for its achievements in helping to positively transform the lives of thousands of families across the County. Phase One exceeded its goal and supported almost 2,000 families with multiple, complex and

persistent issues including unemployment, poor school attendance, involvement in crime and antisocial behaviour, problems with drugs and/or alcohol.

- Hampshire County Council is investing more than £3 million to help older people in the Winchester District stay independent for longer. Funding has been approved to commission “around the clock care” to be provided at the new Chesil Lodge 52 Extra Care flats in Winchester. The Council will be investing up to £45 million over a decade to develop schemes of this kind.
- Government funding of £25.7 million has been allocated, by the Local Growth Fund, towards a £34 million bypass around Stubbington, Fareham. The County Council has demonstrated its commitment to the project by assigning £8.5 million towards the total cost.
- Grants of almost £1 million have been approved to support vulnerable people live full and independent lives. 11 voluntary and community groups are to receive the funding which will help support people with a range of issues such as deafness, HIV, sight loss, as well as help for older people and adults with autism. The money has come from the County Council’s Supportive Communities Programme which aims to support organisations that develop new and innovative ways to support communities to become better connected and help people live independently for longer.
- More energy efficient buildings and street lights have helped Hampshire County Council cut its carbon emissions by more than a third - and saved almost £3 million for Hampshire taxpayers. In just six years HCC has cut emissions from 54,200 tonnes in 2010 to 34,813 tonnes this year. We are now accelerating towards our 2025 target of cutting our emissions to 32,500 tonnes. These latest figures show that the County Council has cut its carbon emissions by 35.8% compared with 2010 figures, and is on track to reach its 40% savings target by 2025 with the ultimate aim of being carbon carbon neutral by 2050.
- The successful installation of 23 Solar Photovoltaic systems across the County Council’s corporate buildings is now delivering efficiency savings of £45,000 per year, and generating 450,000kWh of power annually. A major programme of street lighting replacement has also contributed strongly to the reductions, by using more energy efficient lamps, reducing burning hours and dimming lights.
- Hampshire County Council is to go ahead with phase one of a £24 million two-year investment programme to develop around 100 assisted living units for people with learning and physical disabilities. Phase one of the scheme, with a financial commitment of £14.6 million, will create five developments, providing accommodation in one bedroom or studio flats with supporting communal spaces for staff and group activities. The County Council will own the schemes and work in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord to run the buildings. The County Council will procure 24/7 care and support to meet the needs of the residents within each development. Phase Two of the scheme is expected to involve the development of two or three further schemes comprising 30-35 housing units, by March 2019.
- Almost 7 in 10 of Hampshire adults are overweight or obese and the cost to the NHS in Hampshire in managing diseases related to obesity is estimated at almost £340 million per year! The County Council has commissioned a new self-referral service for people aged 18 years and over. If you are a resident in the administrative county of Hampshire, or are registered with a Hampshire GP and have a Body Mass Index [BMI] of 30+, or don’t know what your BMI is but think you might qualify for this free service, call 0345 602 7068. People who qualify will be offered a free tailored service and will aim to lose not less than 5% of their body weight.

Patricia Stallard

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[pgstallard@aol.com](mailto:pgstallard@aol.com)

02392 251484