

*“Making North Hertfordshire a vibrant place
to live, work and prosper”*



www.north-herts.gov.uk

COUNCIL TAX information 2018/19

INTRODUCTION BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) provides a wide range of services and although you pay all your Council Tax to NHDC, the share we keep is approximately 13%, the equivalent of around 61 pence per day for a Band D property.

Every pound collected in Council Tax is split between the District Council, Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner as shown below.



The Council has already delivered more than £6.5 million of savings in the last seven years in the drive to become more efficient and enable investment in the Council's Objectives.

Much of this has been achieved without having a serious impact on front line services but it is clear that to realise the further significant savings required the Council will need to continue to identify, examine and implement alternative ways of working.

The funding that the Council receives from New Homes Bonus continues to decline and will be 53% less in 2018/19 than in 2016/17. Furthermore, having signed up to the four year funding settlement announced by the Government in February 2016, the Council must plan on the basis that funding from Central Government will reduce drastically again next year. From 2019/20 the Council has to hand back a further £1million of its business rates income to Central Government.

As a result of this ongoing funding reduction, North Hertfordshire District Council has reluctantly decided to increase the amount of

Council Tax it raises by 2.99% for the financial year 2018/19. For the majority of households in the District this will work out around an extra 11p a week.

Our Objectives for 2018/19 are as follows:

- **Attractive & Thriving**

To work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents, where diversity is welcomed and the disadvantaged are supported

- **Prosper & Protect**

To promote sustainable growth within our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage

- **Responsive & Efficient**

To ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints

We have committed to reducing expenditure and generating income to save £2.6 million in the coming year and even with this unfortunately more will be needed in the following years. The situation is requiring us to look at whether we can continue to provide all the services we currently do. However, the needs of residents and local communities will be uppermost in our minds as we continue to make the painful but necessary financial decisions in the months and years ahead.

Despite the tough economic climate, we have committed to investing over £12.5million in key capital projects in the coming year, including opportunities to invest in initiatives that will reduce spending or increase income in the future. Following the opening of the new teaching pool at North Hertfordshire Leisure Centre we have set aside capital funding next year for the Royston Leisure Centre to see if the centre can be expanded to provide a better facility for our residents whilst also providing additional income to the Council. The Green Space Strategy for 2017-21 will continue to ensure significant, sustainable investment in the District's green spaces over the coming years. This includes funding for a Multi-Use Games Area at Bancroft (Hitchin) and renovating the play area at the District Park in Great Ashby during the next year. We have also maintained the allocation of funding for John Barker Place in Hitchin. Whilst North Herts Homes are leading on the redevelopment of this area, the Council can see the benefits that a contribution to a successful scheme in this area would provide.

I hope you will find the information in this leaflet useful.

CLlr Lynda Needham, Leader of the Council

COUNCIL TAX BANDING



COUNCIL TAX LEVELS 2018/19

	District	County	County Social Care	Police	TOTAL
Band A	£148.97	£816.46	£63.85	£109.33	£1,138.61
Band B	£173.79	£952.51	£74.51	£127.56	£1,328.37
Band C	£198.62	£1,088.60	£85.14	£145.78	£1,518.14
Band D	£223.45	£1,224.67	£95.79	£164.00	£1,707.91
Band E	£273.11	£1,496.83	£117.07	£200.44	£2,087.45
Band F	£322.76	£1,768.96	£138.37	£236.89	£2,466.98
Band G	£372.42	£2,041.13	£159.64	£273.33	£2,846.52
Band H	£446.90	£2,449.34	£191.58	£328.00	£3,415.82

COUNCIL TAX BANDINGS (BASED ON THE 1990 VALUATION)

Bandings	Value
Band A	up to £40,000
Band B	£40,001 to £52,000
Band C	£52,001 to £68,000
Band D	£68,001 to £88,000
Band E	£88,001 to £120,000
Band F	£120,001 to £160,000
Band G	£160,001 to £320,000
Band H	Over £320,000

COUNCIL TAX INCREASE FROM 2017/18 TO 2018/19

District	2.99%
Total County (including Social Care)	5.99%
Police	7.89%
TOTALS	5.77%

PARISH/COMMUNITY/TOWN COUNCIL AREAS

If you live in an area with a Parish, Town or Community Council, the following amounts will be added to your Council Tax bill for an equivalent Band D property.

	Band D £		Band D £
Ashwell	74.20	Knebworth	73.44
Baldock	-	Langley	-
Barkway	95.78	Letchworth	-
Barley	66.10	Lilley	61.89
Bygrave	51.83	Nuthampstead	-
Caldecote & Newnham	27.99	Offley	51.16
Clothall	22.87	Pirton	64.15
Codicote	64.02	Preston	28.75
Graveley	34.84	Radwell	16.41
Great Ashby	19.87	Reed	25.49
Hexton	-	Royston	42.53
Hinxworth	64.05	Rushden & Wallington	20.68
Hitchin	-	St. Ippolyts	26.23
Holwell	53.28	St. Pauls Walden	90.31
Ickleford	62.46	Sandon	32.58
Kelshall	36.68	Therfield	21.47
Kimpton	68.06	Weston	43.55
Kings Walden	67.98	Wymondley	74.58

The following relates to Royston Town Council

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET DETAILS 2018/2019

	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
Cultural & Related Services	276,930	110,750	166,180
Environmental & Regulatory Services	4,000	-	4,000
Other Services	132,020	15,870	116,150
Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant		11,340	
Precept		272,270	
RTC General Reserves		2,720	
Total	412,950	412,950	286,330

WHAT DO WE DO?

We deliver a wide range of services including the following:

- Provide three key leisure facilities, North Hertfordshire Leisure Centre, Hitchin Swim Centre and Royston Leisure Centre. In addition we run the Letchworth outdoor pool and manage the sports hall at Fearnhill School. These facilities have had over a million visits in the past year.
- Collect refuse and recycling from 56,700 households.
- Provide information and advice about housing to everyone, including people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Provide parks and open spaces for all to enjoy
- Manage elections not only for the District and County Council but also for the Police and Crime Commissioner and the General election.
- Support voluntary groups through providing grant funding to organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Deal with over 2,000 Planning Applications per year.
- Collect Council Tax and deal with around 7,000 Housing Benefit claims.
- Ensure public health is maintained by carrying out 400 food safety inspections and investigating 600 noise nuisance complaints each year.
- Enable people to stay in their own homes by providing disabled facility grants and our community alarms service Herts Careline.

PROGRESS ON KEY PROJECTS IN 2017/18

In 2017/18 the following projects were delivered:

- Enhancements to the Bancroft Gardens play area.
- Improvements to the Norton Common Wheeled Sports Provision.
- Replacement of the Walsworth Common Access Bridge.
- Redevelopment of North Herts Leisure Centre to provide additional facilities and enhance the overall customer experience.
- Submission of a Local Plan that identifies areas in the District suitable for sustainable development in the future.
- Extension of the service offering provided by the Council's Careline Service to further help clients to remain living at home independently.
- Retendering of the Waste and Street Cleansing Contract in partnership with East Herts District Council with the appointment of new service providers.
- Improvements to the online benefit claims and payments process to better serve those most in need.
- Refurbishment of the Council offices in Letchworth, providing the potential for lettings income from the rental of office space to partners and the hiring of facilities.

The Council's Objectives for 2018 and beyond

The Council set three objectives for 2018/19 and onwards:

- **Attractive & Thriving**

To work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents, where diversity is welcomed and the disadvantaged are supported.

- **Prosper & Protect**

To promote sustainable growth within our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage.

- **Responsive & Efficient**

To ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints.

Projects and activities to support these objectives through 2018/19

- Delivering improvements to green spaces, including;
- Construction of a pathway and roadway at Wilbury Hills Cemetery, Letchworth.
- Renovation of the play area in the District Park at Great Ashby
- Designating air quality management areas in Hitchin to address the improvement of the air quality of the area around Stevenage Road and Payne's Park.
- Supporting community groups such as 'Street Angels, Hitchin' (who patrol Hitchin Town Centre

at weekends and assist late-night revellers) and others concerned with community safety to assist in creating and maintaining a safe environment.

- Facilitating access to debt and budget management advice through supporting the Citizens Advice service and the Black Squirrel Credit Union, a local volunteer credit union who provide low cost loans.
- Working with partners to address homelessness.
- Implementing our Economic Development Strategy for the district to increase inward investment and business development opportunities.
- Supporting the North Herts Homes' regeneration of John Barker Place, Hitchin to provide new homes and better shops.

HOW DOES NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL SPEND IT'S MONEY?

The table below shows how much we plan to spend on each of the main services we provide and how this compares with the previous year.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET ANALYSIS				
	2018/19			2017/18
	Gross Expenditure (£'000s)	Gross Income (£'000s)	Net Expenditure (£'000s)	Net Expenditure (£'000s)
Cultural & Related Services	971	403	568	602
Waste & Recycling Collection	5,866	2,738	3,128	4,431
Leisure & Environmental Services	5,859	3,654	2,205	2,816
Policy & Community Development	1,734	14	1,720	1,429
Revenues & Benefits	38,322	35,079	3,243	2,893
Development & Building Control	1,437	1,006	431	469
Strategic Planning & Enterprise	1,624	280	1,344	1,555
Housing and Public Protection	5,053	2,187	2,866	2,110
Democratic Services	883	3	880	770
Corporate & Other Services	9,059	224	8,835	6,555
Sub-Total	70,808	45,588	25,220	23,631
Commercial Rents		1,106	1,106	1,015
Interest Received		183	183	267
Capital Charges	9,184		9,184	5,804
Total	61,624	46,877	14,748	16,545
Funded By:				
Revenue Support Grant		0	0	
Business Rates Baseline		-2,536	-2,459	
Other grants		-1,312	-2,174	
Council Tax Requirement		-10,976	-10,555	
Contribution to /(from) Reserves		76	-1,357	
Total		-14,748	-16,545	

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

The table below shows how we fund our expenditure. Our income sources from Government, Business (Non-Domestic Rates) and fees and charges do not meet all of the cost of providing our services and the difference is funded from the Council Tax charge to local residents.

Council Revenue Income 2018/19 (£'000s)			
Housing Benefit Subsidy	34,120	Commercial Rents	1,106
Formula Government Grant	-	Investment Interest	183
Retained Business Rates	2,536	Other Grants & Contributions	2,327
New Homes Bonus	1,265	Council Tax	10,976
Fees & Charges	9,189		
		Total	61,701

HOW OUR SPENDING HAS CHANGED FROM 2017/18

The table below shows how our spending has changed from last year.

BUDGET CHANGES 2017/18 to 2018/19	
	£'000s
Council Tax Requirement 2017/18	10,555
Inflation (net of fees and charges increases)	576
Other Base Budget Changes	94
Planned Efficiencies	-2,614
New Investment in Corporate Objectives	147
Increase in Retained Business Rates	-77
Reduction in New Homes Bonus and Other Grants	862
Change in Contribution to Reserves	1,433
Council Tax Requirement 2018/19	10,976

WHAT WE SPEND ON CAPITAL PROJECTS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO YOU AND HOW THAT EXPENDITURE IS FUNDED

The Council plans to invest £12.5million of capital funds in its three objectives:

Attractive and Thriving - includes leisure centre enhancement and other property improvements.

Prosper and Protect - includes the delivery of our transport, cycle and green infrastructure strategies and grants to Housing Associations for the delivery of affordable housing.

Responsive and Efficient - includes improvements to community facilities, the Disabled Facility Grant scheme and investment in IT infrastructure to support new ways of working.

The table below shows what we spend and how we fund our capital expenditure.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING			
	2018/19 Expenditure (£'000s)	Funded by:	2018/19 Funding (£'000s)
Attractive and Thriving	3,600	Capital Receipts	4,813
Prosper and Protect	4,459	Government Grants	1,508
Responsive and Efficient	4,452	Third Party Contributions	505
		Set Aside Receipts	5,145
		Revenue Contribution/ External Borrowing	540
Total	12,511	Total	12,511

WAYS TO PAY YOUR COUNCIL TAX

There are numerous ways in which you can pay your Council Tax. The most popular method is by direct debit but you can pay by debit/credit card, swipe card, standing order and cheque.

www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-tax/how-pay-your-council-tax

HAVING TROUBLE PAYING YOUR COUNCIL TAX?

There are a number of ways that the Council can help you:

- You may be entitled to a discount or help under the Council Tax reduction scheme

www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-tax/discounts-exemptions-and-refunds

- You can contact the Council's housing options team for advice.

www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice

- If you are struggling with money problems and are worried about meeting mortgage or rent payments, you may wish to talk with our Housing Debt Advice Officer 01462 474682
- If you are having trouble paying your Council Tax contact the Customer Service Centre immediately 01462 474000 to speak to the Council's Recovery Team.

MAKING ACCESS TO COUNCIL SERVICES EASIER

You can contact us via our website at www.north-herts.gov.uk

You can ring our Customer Service Centre on **01462 474000**

Or for the hard of hearing on textphone **01462 474800** for all enquiries

You can write to us at:
North Hertfordshire District Council,
PO Box 10613, Nottingham, NG6 6DW

Please use this for all correspondence for the following services: Revenues & Benefits, Planning, Housing & Environmental Health

Post for all other services should continue to be sent to:
District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth, Herts, SG6 3JF

COMMENTS

We welcome all comments about the services we provide and use your feedback to improve our performance. You can register your comments / complaints about any of our services via our website at www.north-herts.gov.uk, by person at the council offices, by post, or by telephone using our Customer Service Centre on 01462 474000.

A free booklet outlining the role of the Local Government Ombudsman is available from the NHDC main offices in Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City or by writing to 21 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BU.

If you would like an audio cassette, Braille or large print version contact: 01462 474552

LEVYING BODIES

Hertfordshire County Council has to contribute to the funding of the Environment Agency (South East and Anglian Regions) and the Lee Valley Regional Park. North Hertfordshire District Council is obliged to inform taxpayers of the gross expenditures of these levying bodies, which is as follows:

Environment Agency South East and Anglian Regions

The Environment Agency is a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions. The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the new Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide 'matching' funding the Agency may seek funding from County Councils in the form of a local levy. The local levy is shared on the basis of Band D equivalents between all contributing bodies within the Committee Area.

Changes in the gross budgeted expenditure between the years reflect the programme of works needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees. For 18/19 the total Local Levy raised has increased by 2% and by 1.99% for the Anglian and Thames areas respectively.

The financial details are:

	Thames Region Flood & Coastal Committee		Anglian Central Regional Flood & Coastal Committee	
	2017/18 £'000s	2018/19 £'000s	2017/18 £'000s	2018/19 £'000s
Gross Expenditure	98,788	97,838	17,948	15,608
Levies Raised	11,130	11,351	1,089	1,110
Total Council Tax Base	4,906	5,001	656	667

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK

Lee Valley Regional Park is a unique leisure, sports and environmental destination for all residents of London, Essex and Hertfordshire. The 26 mile long, 10,000-acre park, much of it former derelict land, is partly funded by a levy on the council tax. This year there has been a 6% decrease in this levy. Find out more about the hundreds of great days out, world class sports venues and award-winning parklands at www.visitleevalley.org.uk

Budget/Levy Changes – 2017/18 to 2018/19 (£'000)

	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m
Authority operating expenditure	11.8	11.2
Authority operating income	(3.4)	(3.3)
Net service operating costs	8.4	7.9
Financing Costs - Debt servicing/repayments	0.5	0.5
- Capital investment	1.3	1.2
Total net expenditure	10.2	9.6
Total levy	(10.2)	(9.6)

Further details on how this budget is spent and the amount each council contributes can be found at www.leevalleypark.org.uk

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