

Major works and improvements

This leaflet contains information about the Council's spending on its day to day services and how this is to be paid for, including details of your council tax.

The council also needs to spend money called "capital" on maintaining its buildings (including schools, leisure centres and libraries), construction works such as major road and school improvements and buying equipment.

The Council's programme of capital works has been developed to be affordable, sustainable and prudent, with projects being carefully prioritised to help achieve the six strategic themes included in the new Council Plan.

In this context, the Council has developed a wide range of capital proposals and spending for next year is planned to be approximately £70m, of which almost £50m will be funded directly by the Council. Some of the major projects in our programme include:

- £20.5m on major works at primary and secondary schools (Including Binfield Learning Village)
- £6.6m on highways infrastructure maintenance and improvement
- £2.1m on maintaining Council buildings, including car-parks, community centres and libraries
- £2.3m on Town Centre redevelopment and highways works
- £7.0m on a Local Housing Company
- £3.7m on LED Streetlights
- £20.0m on Commercial Property
- £3.4m on Civic Accommodation



Contact us

Customer services:

01344 352000
customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Many of our services can now be accessed online:

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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Summaries of this leaflet can be made available in large print, Braille or on audio cassette. Copies in other languages may also be obtained. Please contact customer services on 01344 352000.



Introduction

2017/18 is the second year of the Government's 4 year financial settlement for local authorities. By April 2020 the council will receive no government grant to support its day to day services. Instead, it will be reliant on income from Council Tax and a share of the rates payable by businesses based in the local area.

As a consequence of the reducing Government support and the continuing increase in demand for the services we provide, the Council faces a potential funding shortfall of £25m over the next three years. In this context, setting the Council's budget and council tax for 2017/18 and planning for the years beyond is a very challenging task.

The Government has also recently made a number of changes from its published plans on which the 4 year settlement was based. The most significant for Bracknell Forest was a large reduction in the financial incentive for bringing forward housing development, known as the New Homes Bonus. The Government has used part of this saving to fund an additional one-off grant for Adult Social Care, targeted at areas in greatest need. However, as a relatively prosperous area, Bracknell Forest loses more than it gains from these changes, meaning we need to find even more money to bridge the local funding gap.

Another change made by the Government is to allow councils to re-phase increases in Council Tax specifically aimed at helping pay for the rising costs of adult social care services. The Government will now permit increases of up to 3%, so long as the total increase over the next three years is no greater than 6%. The Governments financial model anticipates all local authorities using this higher rate to help fund adult social care costs.

Given the overall situation, next year's budget is based upon a Council Tax increase of 4.99%, which will contribute £2.5m towards the overall gap. This comprises 1.99% to support the continued delivery of vital front line services including waste and recycling collection and street works, with the remaining 3% supporting pressures in the adult social care budget. The total increase represents just over £1 per week for an average Band D property.

The Council understands that no increase in Council Tax is welcome. We are, of course, continuing to review and transform all our services for residents in order to both reduce their cost and secure a sustainable future for them. The 2017/18 budget includes savings of over £10m, primarily delivered through our transformation programme. We also plan to draw on £2.6m of our reserves to balance the budget, which is available thanks to our long track record of prudent financial management.

Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive

Your Council Tax bill

Your council tax bill is made up of four charges:

1. The cost of the services provided by Bracknell Forest Council (including the levy made by the Environment Agency). Details are given on the inside pages of this leaflet.
2. The cost of services provided by your parish or town council. Details are given on the inside pages of this leaflet.
3. The cost of services provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner of the Thames Valley can be found on the website at <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/information-hub/what-we-spend-and-how-we-spend-it/council-tax-leaflet/> (£170.28 for Band D).
4. The cost of services provided by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority can be found on the website at <http://www.rbfrs.co.uk/wp-content/Council-Tax-leaflet-2017-18.pdf> (£62.49 for Band D).

The table below shows the amount that will be charged for an average band D home, depending on the parish area in the coming year:

COUNCIL TAX : BAND D CHARGE				
AREA	Bracknell Forest Council	Parish Precept	Other Precepting Bodies	Total Band D Charge
	£	£	£	£
Binfield	1,194.39	46.42	232.77	1,473.58
Bracknell	1,194.39	83.66	232.77	1,510.82
Crowthorne	1,194.39	72.85	232.77	1,500.01
Sandhurst	1,194.39	73.29	232.77	1,500.45
Warfield	1,194.39	35.61	232.77	1,462.77
Winkfield	1,194.39	68.96	232.77	1,496.12

Note: Based on a tax base of 44,581 band D properties

Please note these figures exclude any council tax relief you may be entitled to.

How your money is spent

2017/18

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The Council Tax (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 2011

The Environment Agency, as a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Environment Agency (Levies) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, provides the following information:

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 5,200 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river system and existing flood defences together with the operation of a flood warning system and management of the risk of coastal erosion. The financial details are:

Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

	2017/2018 £'000	2016/2017 £'000
Gross Expenditure	98,813	76,358
Levies Raised	11,130	10,912
Total Council Tax Base	4,906	4,801

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 local funding for local priorities and contributions for partnership funding the Committee recommends through the Environment Agency a Local Levy.

Changes in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflect the programme of works for both capital and revenue. The total Local Levy raised has increased by 1.99% from £10.9m in 2016/17 to £11.1m for 2017/18.

What is being spent on your services?

Every year the Council delivers a wide range of services for people who live, work and study in the borough. The Council is split into four departments to deliver these services and spending on each is outlined below:

Chief Executive / Corporate Services

The department provides services to the public (customer services, electoral services, revenue collection) and supports other department's services with financial, legal and HR advice, property management and IT infrastructure and support. The department plans spending £9.893 million next year.

Children, Young People and Learning

The Council's Children, Young People and Learning department will spend £118.364 million to ensure that children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes for their lives through education, advice and guidance, access to support and where necessary specialist placements.

For children and young people aged between 0 and 19 years the Council provides universal, targeted, specialist and crisis intervention services. Some of these are managed directly like Children's Social Care. Others (like schools) are provided indirectly and some are commissioned from other agencies, like most Special Needs provision.

Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

The department will spend £83.550 million to provide advice and information about the range of social care services that may be available to support individuals or families (over 18).

The focus of this support is to enable people to retain their independence, which will mean people can stay in their own homes for as long as possible.

Specific support includes the following areas:

- Older people
- People with a learning disability
- Carers
- People with mental health needs
- People who misuse substances
- People with long term conditions
- Public Health
- Social Housing and Homelessness

Environment, Culture and Communities

£42.821 million will be spent on protecting, maintaining and improving our local environment by providing street cleaning and landscaping services, highway and footpath repairs, refuse and recycling collections, waste disposal, planning and building control services and maintaining local libraries.

We will also be providing public protection through environmental health and trading standards services.

We will continue to provide popular leisure facilities such as the Look Out Discovery Centre, Downshire Golf course and Bracknell Leisure Centre.

Contingencies

When managing such a large budget we need to make sure we have enough money to cover any unexpected emergencies.

General balances

The amount of money we are using this year from balances which we already have "in the bank" to support the cost of our services.

Parish precepts

This is the amount of money your local parish or town council requires to run services in that area. Each individual parish precept for an average band D home in 2017/18 is outlined in the table opposite.

Parish councils

Your Parish Council is the first tier of local government. It is closest to the people it represents. The elected members in each of Bracknell Forest's six parishes work closely with community groups and Bracknell Forest Council to provide services relevant to each area. They vary in size and population but each tailors its services and spending to its community. Some are predominantly urban, and others more rural.

Their work often includes local environmental work in parks and play areas, provision of sports pitches and open spaces, play equipment and allotments. Some run community halls and services for young people and all give grants to help local groups. All of them have staff who can help you with information on local groups and parish and borough-wide services.

Contact your Parish Council to learn more, by telephone or by visiting its website. It is there to serve you and your local needs. Your input helps it provide the right services for your parish.

Binfield Parish Council 01344 454602

www.binfieldparishcouncil.org.uk

Bracknell Town Council 01344 420079

www.bracknelltowncouncil.gov.uk

Crowthorne Parish Council 01344 771251

www.crowthorne.parishcouncil.net

Sandhurst Town Council 01252 879060

www.sandhurst.gov.uk

Warfield Parish Council 01344 457777

www.warfieldparishcouncil.org.uk

Winkfield Parish Council 01344 885110

www.winkfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk

SERVICES	2017/18			2016/17		
	£'000 Gross	£'000 Income	£'000 Net	£'000 Gross	£'000 Income	£'000 Net
Chief Executive/Corporate Services	9,893	(6,399)	3,494	10,626	(4,919)	5,707
Children, Young People and Learning	118,364	(98,312)	20,052	115,327	(96,364)	18,963
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	83,550	(48,921)	34,629	84,290	(48,058)	36,232
Environment, Culture and Communities	42,821	(18,598)	24,223	44,922	(17,969)	26,953
Cost of Services	254,628	(172,230)	82,398	255,165	(167,310)	87,855
Environment Agency Levy	100		100	98		98
Net Interest/Debt Financing Costs	2,942		2,942	1,928	(71)	1,857
Contribution to/from Earmarked Reserves	8,760		8,760		(13,002)	(13,002)
Business Rates		(4,145)	(4,145)		(2,694)	(2,694)
Other Specific Grants		(3,714)	(3,714)		(4,836)	(4,836)
Subtotal	266,430	(180,089)	86,341	257,191	(187,913)	69,278
Contingencies			2,000			1,000
Use of General Balances			(2,568)			(5,174)
Bracknell Forest Council Net Revenue Budget after use of balances			85,773			65,104
(Surplus)/Deficit on collection fund			(9,726)			11,378
Government Support			(22,800)			(26,687)
Bracknell Forest Council Council Tax requirement			53,247			49,795
Parish Precepts			3,157			2,956
Council Tax requirement including Parish Precepts			56,404			52,751

The localisation of Business Rates explains the significant changes in the balance on the Collection Fund and contributions to/from earmarked reserves between 2017/18 and 2016/17.

Bracknell Forest Council	2017/18		2016/17	
	£'000	Per Band D property £	£'000	Per Band D property £
Gross Expenditure	266,430	5,976.31	257,191	5,875.70
Less: Income	(180,089)	(4,039.59)	(187,913)	(4,293.00)
Add: Contingencies	2,000	44.86	1,000	22.85
Net Expenditure	88,341	1,981.58	70,278	1,605.55
Less: Use of General Balances	(2,568)	(57.60)	(5,174)	(118.21)
Net Revenue Budget after use of balance	85,773	1,923.98	65,104	1,487.34
Less: Surplus on Collection Fund	(9,726)	(218.16)	11,378	259.94
Less: Government support	(22,800)	(511.43)	(26,687)	(609.68)
Amount to be raised from Council Tax	53,247	1,194.39	49,795	1,137.60

Details of Gross Expenditure for each Parish with a precept above £100,000

Parish precepts

	2017/18		2016/17	
	£	Band D Charge	£	Band D Charge
Binfield	176,228	46.42	162,997	44.09
Bracknell	1,590,042	83.66	1,463,155	78.66
Crowthorne	195,900	72.85	186,900	71.39
Sandhurst	570,783	73.29	565,799	73.29
Warfield	165,348	35.61	154,075	33.99
Winkfield	459,194	68.96	423,521	64.14

	2017/18	2016/17
	Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure £'000
Binfield	182	169
Bracknell	2,100	2,180
Crowthorne	255	260
Sandhurst	840	674
Warfield	278	274
Winkfield	555	595

