

Ipswich Borough Council

COUNCIL TAX INFORMATION 2018/19



Message from Councillor David Ellesmere, Leader, Ipswich Borough Council:

This Council is continuing to face large cuts in funding from the Government. Despite this, we are still managing to make big improvements to the town and to people's lives and this will continue in the future.

Over the last year we have brought more empty homes back into use, given the green light for businesses and jobs at the Sproughton Enterprise Park, invested in jobs and skills at the university, installed a sprinkler system at Cumberland Towers along with other improvements, supported community groups, started work on a new multi-storey Crown Car Park and town centre improvements, saved bus services and supported an unrivalled cultural and events programme.

Over the coming year we will increase the amount we spend on preventing homelessness including opening a new homeless people's unit, fund new anti-gang crime initiatives, make improvements to our CCTV system, improve street cleaning in the town centre, build more council homes and help provide a new home for the FIND foodbank.

Ipswich will continue to keep brown bin collections free of charge when all other councils in Suffolk are charging up to £50.

Providing services does cost money and we are benefitting not only from careful financial management and making big savings ahead of our targets, but we are also achieving a substantial income from our commercial property investments. Without these investments we would have been faced with making unprecedented cuts in services.

Ipswich's increase in council tax of 15p a week for most residents is less than the rate of inflation and forms only a small part of the increase you will see in your bill this year.

In contrast Suffolk County Council are increasing their share of the bill by 88p a week for most residents and the Police & Crime Commissioner by 17p a week.



Find out more at: www.ipswich.gov.uk/council-tax

Message from Cllr Colin Noble, Leader of Suffolk County Council



Around this time of year, there's usually a lot of talk about how much local authorities are planning to put up council tax. I understand that. Money is tight in households across the country, so any changes to people's monthly outgoings can be a real worry. This is especially the case for people on fixed or low incomes.

Suffolk County Council has tried to do its bit by freezing our share of council tax since 2010. It's not been easy, but we've done it by careful and prudent use of our reserves, by making over £236 million of savings, and finding new ways of delivering essential public services.

Unfortunately, despite continuing to save millions of pounds, we can't freeze council tax this year. In 2018/19, we're facing a significant difference between the amount of money it will cost to provide essential services in Suffolk and the amount of money we actually have to spend.

We've found ways of closing that budget gap, including making savings and using our reserves, together totalling £26.8 million. But we also need to increase the amount of council tax we ask you to contribute, equivalent to 88p extra per week for the most common type of property in Suffolk - band B. This is made up of a 3% increase in the basic council tax (exactly the same as Ipswich Borough Council's 3%) and an additional 2% to help care for older people and people with



learning difficulties – one of the many big and important responsibilities that county councils have. Of course Ipswich's 3% increase will cost residents less because they're responsible for less. Our approach means we can protect frontline services and deliver as best we can for the people of Suffolk.

Often, the debate about council tax increases and budget savings leads us to lose sight of the tremendous good that money does for society. Suffolk County Council spends just under £500 million a year, over 60% of which is used to provide care for elderly people, children in need and education and skills for the next generation. That money also goes

on repairing our roads, protecting us from fire and rogue traders and supporting people to live healthier lives. Additional money is invested in delivering major infrastructure projects like improving Suffolk's access to high speed broadband, building new roads, and creating new river crossings in Lowestoft and Ipswich. The most recent major investment we've agreed is a £21 million programme to resurface and repair 1000 miles of Suffolk roads.

Our priorities for Suffolk include growing our economy in a way that benefits everyone, improving people's health, care and wellbeing and delivering efficient and effective public services. We have a business plan specifically designed to deliver against these priorities in 2018/19.

I'll be frank with you. No - there isn't enough money to do everything we want to do. Local councils are receiving less national funding, so we have to make savings and look to you, our local residents, for support. But I'm very clear that we have to be very careful about how much support we ask for, and we need to listen to what people are saying. We have to strike the right balance.

I know this can be difficult, but my promise is your hard-earned money will be used sensibly to deliver our services to the people of Suffolk in the most cost-effective way.

Find out more at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/counciltax

Message from Tim Passmore, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk



A major part of my role as Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner is to distribute the policing grants from government and set the policing part of your council tax. This means I am responsible for setting the budget, which includes how much you will be asked to pay through your council tax for policing our county, and deciding how it should be spent.

On December 19th the Policing Minister made his announcement about funding for the next financial year and whilst we will receive the same amount of core government funding as in 2017/18, the bottom line is this does not take into account the impact of inflation nor additional policing costs, so I will need to raise the council tax precept to cover this.

Government has revised the precept limit upwards to allow PCCs to raise the policing precept by up to £12 per year – which in Suffolk is a 6.8% increase for a Band D property. I have elected to raise the precept by the full 6.8% which will increase the average payment from £176.85 to £188.82 per year in 2018/19, an average increase of £1 a month (based on Band D property), this equates to 17p a week for most households in Ipswich.

I understand the impact that this will have on you as a resident of Suffolk but the Chief Constable has advised me that the additional funding, generated by a 6.8%

increase, will give much needed stability to the Constabulary.

The precept increase will add a further £2.9 million to the policing budget for 2018/19, this will allow us protect our reserves and maintain the financial viability of the Constabulary, it will also give the Chief Constable the necessary funding he needs to:

- maintain police visibility on the county's roads to prevent criminal access to the county and keep road users safe
- further invest in technology to help tackle the changing profile of criminality
- improve the proactive capability of the Constabulary to help combat drug misuse and youth gang violence
- improve our emergency response
- enhance the effectiveness of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Find out more at: www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk