

Ipswich Borough Council

COUNCIL TAX INFORMATION 2022/23



Message from Cllr David Ellesmere, Leader of Ipswich Borough Council:

Ipswich Borough Council is facing significant pressures on its budget and a large amount of uncertainty over the next few years.

Covid continues to have a large effect on the Council's income, especially around car parking, and we still don't know how much of this is permanent. Inflation is much higher than for many years and is forecast to go higher. This is increasing costs for the Council just as much as it is for you.

The Government's increase in National Insurance will cost the Council more than £700,000 over the next four years but their increase in our funding of 4.3% for next year is much lower than the forecast rate of inflation of 8%.

Although we are confident about dealing with this challenge over the coming year, if these pressures continue then this may require the Council to take tough decisions about service levels in future.

We know how stretched household budgets are becoming too, and we do not wish to add to them unnecessarily.

Ipswich Borough Council's increase of 1.98% in Council Tax is the lowest out of the three elements that make up your bill. For the average Band B property this equates to an increase of 11p a week. Suffolk County Council is increasing your bill by 62p a week and Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner's increase is 15p a week.

This year we are providing extra help to low-income households with a £10 discount for everyone of working age receiving Local Council Tax Reduction. This means over 7,500 households in Ipswich will see their bills reduced from April.

We are keeping your costs down in other ways too, such as by keeping brown bin collections free of charge and providing a free young person's Summer iCard. We are installing solar panels and improved insulation to many of our council houses to keep tenants' energy bills down.

We know many people are worried about crime so we are purchasing five new mobile CCTV cameras that can be deployed to crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots anywhere around the town. We will continue to leave streetlights owned by us on throughout the night.

We are investing in Ipswich's fabulous parks with a five-year programme to significantly improve play areas across the town. We are replacing boardwalks, benches and noticeboards in parks and installing new eco-friendly composting toilets. We have set aside money for a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Chantry Park.

We will continue to work efficiently, making the best of straightened circumstances but also ensure we keep high standards of service, invest and make improvements where we can.



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

Message from Cllr Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council



When I wrote this message to you last year, the country had just entered its third lockdown to slow the spread of Covid. But a roadmap to lift restrictions had also

been published by the Prime Minister and there was hope of recovery, not least due to the amazing rollout of the vaccination programme by our NHS colleagues and volunteers.

I also spoke of hope and turning our attentions towards Suffolk's recovery. Thanks to your commitment to following guidance, making safe choices and getting your jobs, that journey is now underway.

Covid still provides us all with many challenges, especially for families and residents who rely on the services that Suffolk County Council provides. The demands and asks of these services have increased hugely, along with many of the other things that we do.

Which is why this year we will be putting more money towards supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and providing extra resources for adults in need of care. We will not be reducing any of our services. You have also told us other areas of our work which are important to you, such as preventing flooding

and fixing pavements and footpaths – we will also be investing further in these.

Suffolk's biodiversity and our response to climate change remain among our priorities as we continue to protect and enhance our environment. Regarding our own property and estate, we are investing £12.8m to help us reach net zero by 2030. Last year, we planted over 100,000 trees and 10km of new hedgerows and we are on track for a similar amount this season. We are also committing to increase the biodiversity on at least 30% of our land and assets, by 2030.

Our aim is always to provide the best possible services for you and to provide value for money. To make this possible, we are asking for an additional contribution from you to help support those in our communities who need it most.

We are doing this by increasing your council tax contribution by 1.99%, and an additional 1% which will be dedicated to funding adult care. Applying this increase is never a decision we take lightly, and is discussed at great length within the council and also goes through a scrutiny process.

We had the option to increase the bill even further, with another 1% added to the adult care element, but decided against this. We have been facing huge challenges, particularly

the increase in demand on children's services and adult care, but we are confident that our budget addresses these challenges without the need to ask even more from you.

When we asked for your thoughts on council tax in our public consultation, there were more people who agreed that it would need to go up, compared to those that didn't. This was especially true for funding adult care.

With Covid still circulating in our communities we must remain vigilant and above all, get vaccinated. Life does look different for many of us, but Suffolk continues to show amazing strength and charity, looking out for each other and supporting those who need our help.

Together, I look forward to achieving our priorities this year, which are to promote and support the health and wellbeing of all people in Suffolk, strengthen the local economy, protect and enhance the environment and provide value for money for the Suffolk taxpayer.

Thank you for your resilience and community spirit.



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

Message from Tim Passmore, Police & Crime Commissioner for Suffolk



As your Police and Crime Commissioner, setting the budget is one of my most important responsibilities. I must ensure that the Constabulary has the resources it needs to provide an efficient and effective police service for the people of Suffolk.

This year the Policing Minister gave PCCs the ability to raise the policing element of the precept by £10* a year (*based on a Band D property). I opted for this maximum increase and my proposal was supported by the Police and Crime Panel, the body which scrutinises my office. I also sought the views of Suffolk residents. Of the 1166 that responded, 62% supported my proposal.

Suffolk Constabulary is a good force and works hard for the communities it serves.

It is one of the lowest funded per head of population, working across a large geographic area. To continue to provide an efficient and effective service to keep you safe, we really do need this additional investment.

After detailed discussion with the Chief Constable, the plan is to use the precept investment to focus on major improvements to the contact and control service. In all my public engagement, including the recent consultation on my new Police and Crime Plan, the one thing that comes through loud and clear is the public's dissatisfaction with the 101 service. It is critical I address these concerns.

This increased investment will fund the recruitment of additional staff to deal with calls and contact from the public more quickly and manage resources responding to calls for service more effectively. Additional Police Sergeants will be recruited to manage operations and the Constabulary will be able to create a digital desk to ensure it has the required capacity and capability to deal with public expectations regarding online and social media contact.

In addition to the extra precept investment, we have also received additional funding through the national Uplift programme to fund 72 more police officers in Suffolk in 2022/23. This will bring the establishment to over 1400 fulltime officers by the end of March 2023 – many more than there has ever been since I was first elected. This is very good news because it will clearly help improve policing visibility countywide.

Throughout the next financial year, I will monitor the impact that your money has had on policing in the county and, as I've done in previous years, quarterly updates on this progress will be published on my website.

Tim Passmore

www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk



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