Working efficiently for you

Dear Resident,

The Government’s funding for public services and particularly Local Government, continues to fall well short of the growing demand for Council services and increased costs. The gap between the cost of delivering services and available funding, is ever widening. This will once again have a severe impact in the year ahead upon our Borough and the essential services the Council delivers for residents.

The scale of cuts in Government grant funding since 2010 has been unprecedented. The Government’s own “spending power analysis” shows that Halton will have lost £28m (20%) in funding over the period 2010 to 2020, which equates to £218 per head of population. In comparison, the average loss nationally is only 10%. Government grant funding is essential for a borough like Halton, which has high levels of deprivation and an increasing high demand for council services.

We are doing all we can to limit the impact of these cuts, trying as far as possible to protect those services that support the most vulnerable members of our community. However, in some areas such as Children’s Social Care and Adult Social Care, services are under severe pressure. Over recent years, like other councils all across the country, we have seen a huge rise in demand for both Children’s and Adult Social Care Services and as a result costs have escalated well beyond available funding.

Government recognise how critical the position has become and have this year provided some additional grant funding for social care, but it falls way short of what is required. To help meet the shortfall in grant, they have permitted councils to charge an Adult Social Care Precept of up to 2% of council tax.

We are unfortunately, having to consider all possible ways to fill the significant budget gap we face. Halton has developed the reputation over many years of being a well-managed, efficient, Council which has demonstrated strong financial management and provides value for money. We continue to challenge everything we do and spend, in order to identify efficiencies and savings wherever possible. However, we have reached a point where we can simply no longer afford to run all of our services at the same level as we have done previously.

You will have already noticed some changes and reductions to services delivered across the Borough, many of which we would not have wanted to consider. In order to limit service reductions as far as possible, the Council is constantly reviewing its costs and making efficiencies through greater use of ICT, improved procurement, and maximising use of its accommodation. Over recent years we have reduced our workforce significantly, reduced staff pay, terms and conditions and made arrangements to share services with neighbouring councils. Over the coming year we will be consulting with the community about further changes to services.

It is with this complex and extremely challenging backdrop that we have had no choice but to take the difficult decision to increase general Council Tax this year by 1.99%, the maximum permitted by the Government, and also to levy a 2.0% Adult Social Care Precept. We know that this places further burden on already stretched household budgets, however, we do not see any alternative in order to continue to provide essential public services.

These are difficult messages to have to give, and I must thank local people for their continued support during these testing times. We know that many of you will have friends, neighbours and family that rely on Council services in their everyday lives - please be reassured that we are working tirelessly to ensure we do whatever we can to continue to offer this essential support.

Cllr Mike Wharton
Executive Board Member - Resources
About this leaflet

This leaflet contains important information about your Council Tax bill, how your money is spent, what your bill is for the coming year and different ways to pay.

The amount of Council Tax you pay depends on:
- The value of your property based on values at 1 April 1991; and
- Your personal circumstances

For a property that is in Band D (a ‘typical’ property for the UK) the tax is £1784.43 made up of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halton Borough Council charge</td>
<td>£1346.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton Borough Council *</td>
<td>£129.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Authority charge</td>
<td>£210.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Authority charge</td>
<td>£79.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCR Mayoral precept</td>
<td>£19.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>£1784.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Council Tax attributable to Halton Borough Council includes a precept to fund adult social care.

Details of how properties are ‘banded’ are shown below. A full table of tax for each type of property and parish is below.

### Range of valuation bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Up to and including £ 40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>£40,001 - £ 52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>£52,001 - £ 68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>£68,001 - £ 88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>£88,001 - £120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>£120,001 - £160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>£160,001 - £320,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>More than £320,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What you will pay in 2020/21

**Council Tax charges 2020/21**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Halton</th>
<th>Hale</th>
<th>Moore</th>
<th>Daresbury</th>
<th>Preston</th>
<th>Brook</th>
<th>Sandy/ Moor</th>
<th>Halebank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1,189.62</td>
<td>1,238.89</td>
<td>1,200.27</td>
<td>1,209.58</td>
<td>1,211.51</td>
<td>1,209.01</td>
<td>1,239.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1,387.89</td>
<td>1,445.38</td>
<td>1,400.32</td>
<td>1,411.18</td>
<td>1,413.43</td>
<td>1,410.52</td>
<td>1,446.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1,586.17</td>
<td>1,651.87</td>
<td>1,600.37</td>
<td>1,612.78</td>
<td>1,615.36</td>
<td>1,612.03</td>
<td>1,652.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1,784.43</td>
<td>1,858.34</td>
<td>1,800.41</td>
<td>1,814.37</td>
<td>1,817.27</td>
<td>1,813.52</td>
<td>1,859.45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>2,180.97</td>
<td>2,271.30</td>
<td>2,200.50</td>
<td>2,217.56</td>
<td>2,221.11</td>
<td>2,216.52</td>
<td>2,272.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2,577.50</td>
<td>2,684.26</td>
<td>2,600.58</td>
<td>2,620.75</td>
<td>2,624.94</td>
<td>2,619.52</td>
<td>2,685.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>2,974.05</td>
<td>3,097.23</td>
<td>3,000.68</td>
<td>3,023.95</td>
<td>3,028.78</td>
<td>3,022.53</td>
<td>3,099.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>3,568.86</td>
<td>3,716.68</td>
<td>3,600.82</td>
<td>3,628.74</td>
<td>3,634.54</td>
<td>3,627.04</td>
<td>3,718.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Making it easier to pay your bill

You can pay your Council Tax by direct debit, card, cash, cheque or online.

Your Council Tax bill is normally payable by ten monthly instalments, however if you wish to pay over 12 months, please contact us by 15 April. If you become liable part way through the year or receive a bill after the start of the year your instalments will be reduced accordingly.

Details of the monthly instalments for the current year are shown at the bottom of your bill. You may pay fortnightly provided the monthly amount is paid in full by the due date.

We’re here to help. If you have difficulty in paying your Council Tax, please call us immediately, we will make an arrangement to help you clear the debt.

**Direct Debit**
Monthly installments starting 1st, 10th, 20th or 28th April

**Half yearly**
1st installment due 15th April, 2nd installment due on or before 1st September

**Annually**
Payable on or before 15th April

**Debit/credit card**
Payment can be made over the telephone using most major debit / credit cards.
Please call the automated payment line on 0303 333 4300 (open 24hrs, seven days a week)

**Online**
Payment can be made online at www.halton.gov.uk
You will need to have your account reference number to hand

**Cheque**
Cheque payments are no longer accepted at Halton Direct Link. Please send by post to Halton Borough Council, Revenues & Benefits, PO Box 223, Widnes WA8 2DA
Please make your cheque payable to Halton Borough Council

**Cash**
Pay by monthly instalments starting 15th April using one of the payment kiosks located at any Halton Direct Link (see last page for locations) or the Libraries detailed below:

Runcorn Library
Granville Street, Runcorn WA7 1NE

Ditton Library
Queens Avenue, Ditton, Widnes WA8 8HR
Click here for library opening times.
Please do not send cash through the post.

**The easy way to pay.** If you already pay other bills by direct debit, you will know how simple it is. With direct debit there is no more queuing, postage and you have the peace of mind knowing your bill is being paid on time. You can set up your direct debit by calling us on 0151 511 7771, or in person at any Halton Direct Link, just remember to have your bank details with you. We will confirm details of your direct debit within three working days. As well as being simple and safe for you, paying by direct debit helps us keep costs down too, therefore helping to keep the Council Tax as low as possible.

**Having problems paying?**
We’re here to help —

If you have difficulty in paying your Council Tax, please call us immediately and we will make an arrangement to help you clear the debt.
A guide to Council Tax

Council Tax is payable on most homes. How much you pay, before benefits and discounts, depends on the “banding” of the property. A ‘typical’ house in the UK is one that was valued at 1 April 1991 at between £68,001 and £88,000 and so is in tax ‘band D’. Houses with lower values are put in bands A to C and pay less tax, while those with higher values are put in bands E to H and pay more tax.

The band of your house and the amounts you pay are shown on your bill.

Are you paying too much?

The Council Tax bill for each band assumes that there are at least two adults living in each property. If there is only one adult, a 25% discount will be given.

Any person over 18 years old is counted as an adult. The following people may not count when we look at the number of adults who live in a property:

- Full time students, student nurses and Youth Training trainees
- Patients resident in hospital
- Anyone being looked after in care homes
- Anyone with a severe mental illness
- Anyone who lives in a hostel or a shelter
- 18 and 19 year olds still at or just left school
- Care-workers working for low pay (Less than £36 per week)
- Anyone caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18
- Diplomats and visiting services staff
- Members of religious communities (monks & nuns)
- People in prison (except those in prison for non-payment of Council Tax or fine)
- Annexes occupied by members of the main household’s family, or used as part of the main dwelling are entitled to 50% discount

Your bill will show if you are entitled to a discount. If none is shown but you think you could be entitled to one, call us immediately on 0151 511 7771.
Should you be paying Council Tax?

Owners of empty properties will be liable for Council Tax.

Some properties that have no one living in them may be exempt if they:

- are owned by a charity (exempt for up to six months)
- are left empty by someone who has gone to prison
- are left empty by someone who has moved in order to receive personal care in a hospital or a home or elsewhere
- are left empty by someone who has moved to provide personal care to another person
- have been left empty by students
- are waiting probate or letters of administration to be granted (and for up to six months after)
- have been repossessed
- are the responsibility of a bankrupt’s trustee
- are empty because no one is allowed to live there by law
- are waiting to be lived in by a minister of religion
- are unoccupied granny annexes
- are made up of a pitch or a mooring which is not occupied by a caravan or a boat
- are solely occupied by students, under 18’s, or severely mentally impaired people.

There are no discounts for properties which are unoccupied and unfurnished which do not fall into any of the exemption categories listed above. These properties are subject to 100% charge. Second Homes are also subject to 100% charge. However some second homes may still be eligible for 50% discount. If you are responsible for Council Tax on two furnished properties one of which is not your main home, you may be eligible for a 50% discount if you are required to occupy either property as a condition of your employment (it is specified as part of your employment contract). This discount may also apply to members of the armed forces.

For a property to be deemed a job-related dwelling it must meet the conditions outlined in the Schedule contained within The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 as follows:

1. (1)... a dwelling is job-related for a person if it is provided for him by reason of his employment or for his spouse by reason of the spouse’s employment, in any of the following cases-

   (a) where it is necessary for the proper performance of the duties of the employment that the employee should reside in that dwelling;
   (b) where the dwelling is provided for the better performance of the duties of the employment, and it is one of the kinds of employment in the case of which it is customary for employers to provide dwellings to employees

2. (1)...a dwelling is job-related for a person if he or his spouse is required, under a contract to which this sub-paragraph applies, to live in that dwelling
From 1st April 2018, people aged between 18 and 25 who were previously under the care of a Local Authority may be entitled to a discount.

From 1st April 2019, Halton Borough Council will provide a 100% discretionary council tax discount for all foster carers resident within the borough who foster Halton children directly with the Council

Please contact us on 0151 511 7771 for further information.

Properties that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years and less than five years are subject to an additional empty homes premium of 100% and 200% for those empty over five years.

A billing authority also has discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax payable for situations that are not covered by national discounts and exemptions. This can be used in individual cases or to determine classes of case in which liability may be reduced.

If you think your property may be exempt, please contact us on 0151 511 7771.

How to appeal

You may only appeal against the band your home is in if one of the following applies:

- The property has significantly changed in value because of demolition or adaptation work or because of a change in the area such as a major new road next to the property
- You start or stop using part of the property as a business, or the balance between domestic and business use changes
- The Listing Officer has altered a list without a proposal having been made by a taxpayer
- You become the taxpayer of the property for the first time (you must appeal within six months)

Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of your bill.

If you wish to appeal, you should contact the Listing Officer, The Valuation Office Agency, Durham Customer Service Centre, Wycliffe House, Green Lane, Durham DH1 3UW.

You may also appeal if you consider that you are not liable to pay Council Tax, or you believe there has been a mistake in calculating your bill.

If you wish to appeal on these grounds, you should contact Halton Borough Council in writing.

If your appeal is successful, you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid tax. If you think your property may be exempt please contact the Council Tax team on 0151 511 7771.

Important information about your Council Tax data

Halton Borough Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you have provided for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. For further information and privacy notices, please visit www.halton.gov.uk/dataprotection
Are you entitled to Council Tax reduction?

Over 35% of people who are entitled to claim money off their Council Tax bill are missing out — could you be one of them?

You do not have to be unemployed to claim Council Tax reduction. If you are in work but on a low income, Council Tax reduction could pay some of your Council Tax bill.

**Housing Benefit**

If you pay rent for your home and are on a low income, you may also qualify for help towards paying this too. You may be able to get Housing Benefit if you are on other benefits, work part-time, or work full-time on a low income.

**How much will you get?**

If you are eligible for housing benefit and/or Council Tax reduction, the amount you receive will depend on how much you have to pay in rent/Council Tax and your circumstances. This includes:

- Your income (and partner’s income if you have one)
- Your savings
- The number of children that live with you
- Other people in your household
- If you or someone in your family has a disability

**Second adult rebate**

You may also be able to reduce your Council Tax bill if you live with someone who is on a low income and you would normally be entitled to a single person discount if they were not living with you. The rebate is based on the income of any second adult that lives with you, not on your income or savings.

**How to claim**

If you are unsure if you will qualify, you should make a claim to find out. For expert advice, leaflets and application forms, contact our Benefits Service:

In person — at any Halton Direct Link
By telephone — 0151 511 7772

By email — benefits@halton.gov.uk

You will find more information about benefits on our website [www.halton.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.halton.gov.uk/benefits)
Don’t delay, report today!

If you receive Council Tax reduction and/or housing benefit, you should tell us immediately if your circumstances change. Things you need to tell us about include:

- A change in your income, including the type of income or the amounts you receive
- A person moving in or out of your home, including additions to your family
- A child leaving school, or further/higher education
- A change in the income of anyone living in your home, other than yourself or your partner

It is important that you tell us about these changes so that you do not miss out on benefits you are entitled to, or that you do not receive benefits you are not entitled to. If you receive more than you are entitled to, we may claim the money back by taking it off future payments, or by sending you a bill.

Maximise your income – claim it or lose it

Every year the Welfare Rights Service helps residents of Halton to claim over £2.5 million in welfare benefits.

This is money that people are often unaware they are entitled to. Much of this money is not “means tested”, but depends on your state of health and will not affect any other benefit entitlement.

Our Welfare Rights Service can help in a number of ways:

- Benefit check — a free and confidential benefit check to maximise your income and advise and apply for any welfare benefits you may be entitled to
- Appeals — help in making an appeal against a decision for any welfare benefits, where you have refused or think the decision is wrong
- Money advice — free and confidential advice and debt management to help you with your finances

To contact the Welfare Rights Services call 0151 511 8930.
How the money is spent

The calculation of the amount of Council Tax is based on the spending requirements of Halton Borough Council, Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner, Cheshire Fire, Liverpool City Region Mayor and, if appropriate, the relevant Parish Council.

The Council’s spending (known as the ‘Budget Requirement’) is planned to be £115.770m. Schools are funded by a specific grant known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The following chart demonstrates how the operational budget requirement is split over each of the Council’s services.

**Budget Requirement by Service 2020/21**

- Education / Children’s Services 55%
- Adult Social Care 21%
- Cultural, Planning and Environmental Services 10%
- Highways, Roads & Transport 5%
- Other Services 9%

Local Government Settlement Funding (incorporating Top-Up Grant), Business Rate Retention and a surplus contribution from the Collection Fund (Business Rates & Council Tax), are deducted from the Budget Requirement to give the ‘Council Tax Requirement’.

Council Tax is calculated by reference to the number of equivalent band D properties in Halton, which is 35,359 (called ‘The Tax Base’) and is expressed as a charge per band D property. Charges for other bands are then arrived at using a set ratio (see Council Tax Charges on Page 3 for details of all the band charges).
Halton’s band D charge is £1,475.70 and is calculated from the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020/21</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Gross Expenditure</td>
<td>395,193,807</td>
<td>384,621,486</td>
<td>10,572,321</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(less) Income</td>
<td>279,423,840</td>
<td>276,000,636</td>
<td>3,423,204</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</td>
<td>115,769,967</td>
<td>108,620,850</td>
<td>7,149,117</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(less) Top Up Grant</td>
<td>5,514,611</td>
<td>4,895,713</td>
<td>618,898</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Rate Retention</td>
<td>54,250,546</td>
<td>51,006,749</td>
<td>3,243,797</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection Fund Contribution Note 1</td>
<td>3,825,534</td>
<td>3,121,542</td>
<td>703,992</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63,590,691</td>
<td>59,024,004</td>
<td>4,566,687</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Tax Requirement Note 2</td>
<td>52,179,276</td>
<td>49,596,846</td>
<td>2,582,430</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: The Collection Fund contribution is as a result of the net surplus in business rates and council tax billed to 31 March 2020 compared to forecast amounts.

Note 2: The increase in the council tax requirement is a combination of an increase of 3.99% to the council tax charge for the council and an increase of 409 (1.17%) to the Tax Base.

The band D charge is calculated by dividing the above Council Tax Requirement by the Tax Base.

**Band D Council Tax Charge Calculation:** \( \frac{52,179,276}{35,359} = \text{£1,475.70} \)

The aggregate band D charge for Halton is made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020/21</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council Band D Charge</td>
<td>1,475.70</td>
<td>1,419.08</td>
<td>56.62</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Authority Band D Charge</td>
<td>210.44</td>
<td>200.44</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Authority Band D Charge</td>
<td>79.29</td>
<td>77.74</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool City Region Mayor Band D Charge</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Council Tax Band D Charge</td>
<td>1,784.43</td>
<td>1,716.26</td>
<td>68.17</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Properties in the parishes will be liable to pay an extra charge to cover the parish needs. The 2020/21 Tax Base, Precept, and Band D charge for each Parish are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hale</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>49,002</td>
<td>73.91</td>
<td>43,225</td>
<td>65.49</td>
<td>8.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>5,225</td>
<td>15.98</td>
<td>4,752</td>
<td>14.44</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daresbury</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>5,359</td>
<td>29.94</td>
<td>4,935</td>
<td>28.53</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston Brook</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>12,084</td>
<td>32.84</td>
<td>11,788</td>
<td>32.84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halebank</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>39,235</td>
<td>75.02</td>
<td>20,905</td>
<td>39.74</td>
<td>35.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandymoor</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>36,799</td>
<td>29.09</td>
<td>32,559</td>
<td>26.78</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total precept</td>
<td></td>
<td>147,704</td>
<td></td>
<td>118,164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Secretary of State made an offer to adult social care authorities. ("Adult social care authorities" are local authorities which have functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014, namely county councils in England, district councils for an area in England for which there is no county council, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.)

The offer was the option of an adult social care authority being able to charge an additional “precept” on its council tax without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting its expenditure on adult social care from the financial year 2016-17. It was originally made in respect of the financial years up to and including 2019-20. If the Secretary of State chooses to renew this offer in respect of a particular financial year, this is subject to the approval of the House of Commons.”
Non-Domestic Rates

Non-Domestic Rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the method by which those who are liable for non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements, from April 2017, local authorities will keep 100% of the business rates collected locally.

This money, together with revenue from council tax payers, revenue support grant provided by the Government and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by Halton Borough Council and other local authorities in your area. Further information about the business rates system, including transitional and other reliefs may be obtained at www.gov.uk.

For 2020/21, the Government has set the standard non-domestic multiplier at 51.2 pence per £ of the rateable value and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier will be 49.9 pence.

Valuation of Property

All rateable values are provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), which is a division of HM Revenue & Customs. More detailed information on the valuation of properties can be obtained by visiting their website at www.voa.gov.uk. For further details, you can e-mail the VOA at: ratingnorthwest@voa.gsi.gov.uk, write to the Agency at Redgrave Court, Merton Road, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 7HS or call them on 03000 501501.

Please note that you must pay in accordance with the instalments shown on your bill, pending any appeal against the rateable value for the property.

Empty Property Rates

The rating liability of empty property is presently 100% of the rate due, using the standard non-domestic rating multiplier, once the initial exemption period has expired. The exemption is three-months for offices, shops and other non-industrial properties and six-months for industrial premises, such as factories, workshops and warehouses.

The Government reduced the threshold for the exemption for empty properties in 2011/12 only vacant premises with a rateable value below £2,900 qualify for this exemption. This condition will continue to apply for the 2020/21 financial year.

Contact the Team

You should not hesitate to contact the Non-Domestic Rate Team on 0151 511 8932 or by email at business.rates@halton.gov.uk, should you require any further information on any rating matters.

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 6500 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the North West 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:

**North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019/2020 000’s</th>
<th>2020/2021 000’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>£63,830</td>
<td>£98,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Levies Raised</strong></td>
<td>£4,017</td>
<td>£4,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Council Tax Base</strong></td>
<td>2,145</td>
<td>2,178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Regional Flood and Coastal Committees recommend through the Environment Agency a local levy.

A change in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflects the programme of works for both capital and revenue needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to which you contribute. The total Local Levy raised by this committee has increased by 2.0%.

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £4,016,646 in 2019/2020 to £4,096,979 for 2020/2021.
Worried about money?

If you have lost your job, are working less hours, or just struggling to pay your bills because of growing debt, we are here to help you. Our advisors can give you practical help, advice on managing your debts, money saving tips, benefits advice and ways to deal with other financial problems. Give us a call today on 0303 333 4300.

Looking for work?

If you are unemployed, at risk of redundancy, looking for a career change or you think you need to improve your skills, there is a range of help at hand.

Our Adult Learning team offers courses to improve English, Maths and ICT skills - visit www.halton.gov.uk/adultlearning or call us on 0303 333 4300.

The Halton Employment Partnership Award is a programme aimed at enhancing your job prospects by combining employability skills with sector-specific training.

The course is delivered in two parts. During the first two weeks you will cover:

CV and letter writing, job search and job applications, interview skills, IT for work, team working, communication and assertiveness, setting goals and action planning, time management.

The following two weeks offer you the opportunity to access sector specific training in Customer Care, Hospitality & Leisure or Retail. The course also includes achievement of a Health & Safety Certificate.

For more information call 0151 511 8931, visit www.halton.gov.uk/hep or email: hep@halton.gov.uk.

Halton People Into Jobs can offer a wide range of support to help you get back to work if you are unemployed, visit www.halton.gov.uk/hpij or call 0303 333 4300.

Other sources of help include:

Citizens Advice Bureau (www.citizensadvice.org.uk t: 08451 304055) can give you advice on managing your finances and any tax issues.

StepChange (www.stepchange.org t: 0800 1381111) is a charity that provides confidential free counselling and money management advice.

The National Debtline (www.nationaldebtline.co.uk t: 0808 808 4000) provides free debt advice and support.

Contact details:

Council Tax:
Tel: 0151 511 7771
Email: council.tax@halton.gov.uk

Business Rates:
Tel: 0151 511 8932
Email: business.rates@halton.gov.uk

Benefits:
Tel: 0151 511 7772
Email: benefits@halton.gov.uk

Cheshire Police Authority
Tel: 01244 614003

Cheshire Fire Authority
Tel: 01606 868484

You can also write to:
Strategic Director — Policy & Resources
Halton Borough Council
Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes WA8 7QF
Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Each year, the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner uses funds raised from Council Tax to support Cheshire Constabulary’s budget to keep communities safe.

More information of how they use those funds can be found at https://www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-i-publish/what-i-spend-and-how-i-spend-it/precept/

This information can also be found on pages 18 and 19.

For further information, contact:
Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner
www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01606 364000

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service

Each year the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service uses funds raised from Council Tax to support their services.

More information of how they use those funds can be found at http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents/council-tax-leaflets

For further information, contact:
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Winsford
Cheshire
CW7 2FQ
Tel: 01606 868700
Halton Direct Link
All together - a better way

We are here to help you however you choose to contact us:

In person

If you would like to speak to one of our expert advisors face-to-face you can visit us at Halton Direct link. You will find us at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Halton Lea Shopping Centre</th>
<th>Widnes Brook Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
<td>9:00 — 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>9:00 — 13:00</td>
<td>9:00 — 13:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Call us

If it is more convenient for you to use the telephone, then just call our contact centre on 0303 333 4300 we are open 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday.

Whichever way you choose to get in touch, our expert staff will be there to help. They are fully trained to help with Council Tax queries and payments, benefits advice, street lighting repairs, pest control, waste management enquiries and much, much more.

If they cannot help you directly themselves they will ensure your query is passed on to the correct person and that you receive a prompt response.

Visit our website

Don’t forget that our website www.halton.gov.uk has lots of useful information about council services, our borough, facts and figures, what’s on and other local news.

You can also pay your Council Tax online or email us with your questions and comments.

If you do not have access to the internet at home or work, you can use the internet for FREE at one of our libraries or any Halton Direct Link.
The Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region works as head of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to ensure that all areas of our region share in the benefits of a fair and prosperous local economy.

As well as leading on issues such as the economy, transport, housing and skills, the Mayor is responsible for shaping the future of our region around the needs of our communities. He is your voice and the voice of the Liverpool City Region on the world stage and when lobbying government for greater funding and local decision-making.

The Mayor is accountable to, and represents the people of, all six boroughs in Liverpool City Region: Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral.

In accordance with the Combined Authorities (Finance) Order 2017, the Metro Mayor is seeking to set a Mayoral precept for 2020/21 of £19 per Band D property - which is a freeze on the last year’s precept and the lowest rate in the country. Most Council Tax payers across the City Region will pay a Band A Council Tax rate of £12.67 per year.

This funding will help the Metro Mayor and Combined Authority to keep delivering for you — as it has with the £400m of investment across the city region, the 9000 jobs and 5500 apprenticeships it has helped to create and the almost £50m it has invested in local colleges. The precept will enable CA to ensure its long-term financial sustainability, and see that the Mayoral objectives — a London-style integrated transport network, a fairer, more inclusive local economy and a green industrial revolution — are delivered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2019/20 £’000</th>
<th>2020/21 £’000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>159,935</td>
<td>270,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(42,945)</td>
<td>(143,105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(95,400)</td>
<td>(97,403)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13,915)</td>
<td>(21,828)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,675</td>
<td>8,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>405,624</td>
<td>412,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>19.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: 2019/20 and 2020/21 expenditure and income for the Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor and Combined Authority.
The movement in the gross expenditure budget is detailed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>£'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Expenditure 2019/20</td>
<td>159,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowance for pay inflation</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in Merseytravel and Tunnels operating grants</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passport Special Rail Grant</td>
<td>94,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in debt servicing costs</td>
<td>-1,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and capacity payments to Merseytravel</td>
<td>8,282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A additional capacity and one off election costs</td>
<td>5,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton Differential Levy</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Expenditure 2020/21</td>
<td>270,351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, visit www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk

**Transport Funding**

The LCRCA’s transport responsibilities are funded through transport levies across each of the six councils. This funds concessionary travel, subsidised bus services, the Mersey Ferries and a range of other services. The transport levy 2020/21 for each of the Merseyside Councils within the LCRCA is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council</th>
<th>Transport Levy 2019/20 £'000</th>
<th>Transport Levy 2020/21 £'000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowsley</td>
<td>10,006</td>
<td>10,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>33,095</td>
<td>33,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Helens</td>
<td>12,073</td>
<td>12,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sefton</td>
<td>18,490</td>
<td>18,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirral</td>
<td>21,736</td>
<td>22,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>95,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>97,404</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For historical and legal reasons Halton Council currently provide transport activities directly within the boundaries of the borough of Halton.

This is funded through a differential transport levy collected by Halton on behalf of the LCRCA which will be £3.2m for 2020/21.

**Mayor Steve Rotheram**

Metro Mayor Liverpool City Region

**Mr John Fogarty, B.A. Hons, C.P.F.A.**

Director of Corporate Services: Liverpool
A budget that increases police officer visibility

I am pleased that I have been able to set a police budget for 2020/21 that will see increased investment in neighbourhood policing to provide a more visible police presence across Cheshire.

Over the next year, all of Cheshire’s 122 policing communities will be assigned their own named police officer that is dedicated to tackling issues in each area. The new neighbourhood officers will work alongside the PCSOs already dedicated to each policing community to develop strong links with local residents and tackle emerging issues before they become more serious.

We know that a visible policing presence not only provides reassurance, it can also prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and this investment, along with the extra funding from Government as part of their uplift programme, will see police officer numbers in Cheshire rise to their highest level since 2010.

I have been able to invest in these officers as part of my budget thanks to Cheshire residents who have, once again, supported an increase in the policing precept to invest in neighbourhood policing.

This year’s precept consultation received the largest response we’ve ever had with two thirds of respondents agreeing to a small increase. This is testament to local peoples’ passion and commitment to policing and community safety in Cheshire.

When I was out talking to residents in our communities many of them told me that they wanted to see increased investment in frontline policing to increase police officer visibility.

As result, the policing precept – the element of council tax that pays for policing – will rise by an average of £10 per year, which is less than 20p per week, to help fund this year’s budget.

 Whilst I still believe that funding for policing should come from the government, not the local taxpayer, I have listened to the Chief Constable and the public and increased the precept by a small amount to keep our communities safe.

Please be assured that I will continue to represent your views on policing and crime and will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure Cheshire remains one of the safest areas in the country to live, work and visit.

David Keane
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire
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### Priority Developments

- A named, face police officer for every community in Cheshire.
- Increased investment in Cheshire Constabulary’s force control centre to provide an improved service for callers to 999 or 101.
- Further investment in ‘pro-active’ operations to tackle county lines drug activity and other serious and organised crime.
- Funding to support the development of the approaches used by Cheshire’s Integrated Anti-Stalking Unit to support victims whilst managing the risk posed by perpetrators.
- Further support for Cheshire’s Women’s Centres to support survivors of domestic abuse.
- Improved occupational health for police officers and staff with a particular focus on mental health.

### Council tax bands for policing

The Government announced on 22 January 2020 that Cheshire Constabulary would receive £207.8 million to fund local policing in 2020/21. This is an estimated £14.8m increase of funding to cover unavoidable pressures on policing of which the Government assumed £4.8m would come from local taxpayers through a £10 increase (for the average band D property) in the policing precept. Earlier in January, I launched a public consultation asking local residents if they would be willing to agree to a precept increase of up-to an extra £2 per month (£24 per annum). More than 2,500 Cheshire residents and local businesses responded to this consultation with 63 per cent agreeing to this increase. Despite this, the Government set a £10 cap to increasing the policing precept. Therefore the precept will rise by 4.99 per cent which, on average, equates to a £10 per annum rise.

### Where does the funding come from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government grant</td>
<td>114,968,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council tax precept</td>
<td>79,995,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income &amp; specific grants</td>
<td>34,231,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total funding and income</td>
<td>229,194,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Want to know more...

- Follow me on Twitter: @CheshirePCC
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/cheshirepcc
- Instagram: PCC Instagram @cheshirepcc
- Website: www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01606 364000