

Your Services, Your Halton

# A guide to Council Tax and Business Rates 2017/2018

[www.halton.gov.uk](http://www.halton.gov.uk)



# Working efficiently for you

Dear Resident,

Government budget cuts continue to bite hard, with Halton yet again facing unfair and savage reductions to its budget in the year ahead. The scale of cuts in Government grant funding has been unprecedented. This year, the grant the Council receives from Government will be reduced by a further £5million (9%) – **equivalent to a cut of £40 for every person living in Halton**. We estimate that Halton's Government grant funding will have been reduced by £63million (61%) or **£500 per person**, over the ten years between 2010 and 2020. Government grant funding is essential for a borough like Halton, which has high levels of deprivation and therefore a high demand for council services.

I must stress to you that 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 in our community. However in some areas, such as children's social care and adult social care, services are coming under particular pressure. Over recent years, like other councils across the country, we have seen a huge rise in demand for these services and as result, costs have escalated.

Acknowledging this widespread problem, last year the Government allowed Councils to increase council tax by up to a further 2%, called the **Social Care Precept**. This year the Government have recognised that this was nothing like sufficient to meet the shortfall in funding, so they have increased it to 3%.

We are unfortunately, having to consider all possible ways to fill the significant budget gap we face. As the external auditors regularly confirm, Halton is a well-managed Council which has demonstrated strong financial management. 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 may have already noticed some changes and reductions to services delivered across the Borough, many of which we would not have wanted to consider. We have also reduced our workforce, 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 challenging backdrop that we have had to take the difficult decision to increase Council Tax this year by **1.9%**, in addition to the full **3% Social Care Precept increase**. We know that this places further burden on already stretched household budgets, however, we do not see any alternative.

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**

## Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, Halton Borough Council became part of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, which is a strategic body charged with overseeing certain functions on behalf of, and in partnership with, the five Merseyside councils and Halton. The Combined Authority has particular responsibilities for regeneration, employment and skills, housing, and transport. In respect of these particular responsibilities, Halton will be fully integrated from 1st April 2017, but will remain the Combined Authority's transport delivery body within its own boundaries.

# 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 £1550.00 made up of the following:

Halton Borough Council charge	£1250.66
Halton Borough Council *	£61.61
Police Authority charge	£164.44
Fire Authority charge	£73.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1550.00</b>

\* 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

### Band

<b>A</b>	Up to and including £ 40,000
<b>B</b>	£40,001 - £ 52,000
<b>C</b>	£52,001 - £ 68,000
<b>D</b>	£68,001 - £ 88,000
<b>E</b>	£88,001 - £120,000
<b>F</b>	£120,001 - £160,000
<b>G</b>	£160,001 - £320,000
<b>H</b>	More than £320,000

# What you will pay in 2017/18

## Council Tax charges 2017/18

Band	Halton	Hale	Moore	Daresbury	Preston Brook	Sandymoor	Halebank
<b>A</b>	1,033.33	1,059.76	1,042.53	1,050.94	1,055.42	1,050.28	1,053.26
<b>B</b>	1,205.56	1,236.40	1,216.29	1,226.10	1,231.33	1,225.33	1,228.82
<b>C</b>	1,377.78	1,413.02	1,390.05	1,401.26	1,407.23	1,400.38	1,404.36
<b>D</b>	1,550.00	1,589.65	1,563.80	1,576.41	1,583.13	1,575.42	1,579.90
<b>E</b>	1,894.44	1,942.90	1,911.31	1,926.72	1,934.93	1,925.51	1,930.98
<b>F</b>	2,238.88	2,296.15	2,258.81	2,277.03	2,286.73	2,275.60	2,282.07
<b>G</b>	2,583.33	2,649.41	2,606.33	2,627.35	2,638.55	2,625.70	2,633.16
<b>H</b>	3,100.00	3,179.30	3,127.60	3,152.82	3,166.26	3,150.84	3,159.80

# 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.

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.

Details of the monthly instalments for the current

**Direct Debit** Monthly installments starting 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> 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 note that a surcharge of 2% will be made on all credit card payments however no charge will be made for the use of debit 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](http://www.halton.gov.uk)  
**You will need to have your account reference number to hand**

**Cheque** Please pay in person at any Halton Direct Link, or 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 installments 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 £68,000 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.

## Help if you are disabled

If you, or someone living with you, need a room, an extra bathroom, kitchen or extra space in your property to meet special requirements arising from a disability you may be entitled to a discount.

Your bill may be reduced to that of a property in the band immediately below the band shown for your property. If you are already in band A, the lowest valuation band, you may still qualify for a reduction of 1/9th of band D charge.

# 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.

From 1st April 2017 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, please see [www.halton.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.halton.gov.uk/counciltax) for full details. Properties that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years are subject to 50% empty homes premium

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, 17th Floor  
53 Portland Street Manchester M1 3LD Tel: 03000 501501

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, please visit [www.halton.gov.uk/dataprotection](http://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](mailto: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 you 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

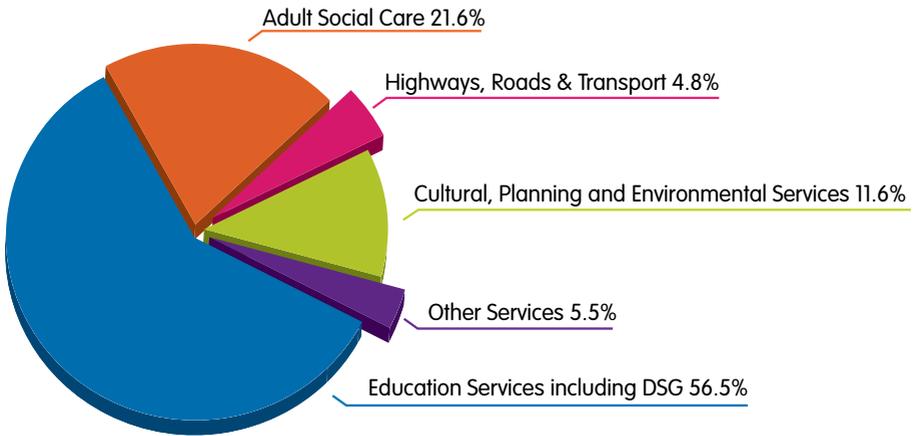
To contact the Welfare Rights Services call 0151 511 8930.

# 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 Authority, Cheshire Fire Authority and, if appropriate, the relevant Parish Council.

The Council's spending (known as the 'Budget Requirement') is planned to be £103.249m. Schools are funded by a specific grant known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) The following chart demonstrates how the budget requirement is split over each of the Authority's services.

## Budget Requirement by Service 2017/18



Local Government Settlement Funding Assessment (incorporating Top-Up Grant), Business Rate Retention and a surplus contribution from the Collection Fund (Business Rates Retention & Council Tax), is 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 33,818 (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 £1,312.27 and is calculated from the following figures:

	2017/18 £	2016/17 <sup>Note 1</sup> 'Restated' £	Difference £	%
<b>Gross expenditure</b>	353,489,956	345,418,533	8,071,423	2.3
<b>(less) Income</b>	250,240,752	246,958,570	3,282,182	1.3
<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>103,249,204</b>	<b>98,459,963</b>	<b>4,789,241</b>	<b>4.9</b>
<b>(less) Settlement Funding</b>				
Revenue Support Grant <sup>Note 2</sup>	0	22,250,580	-22,250,580	-100.0
Top Up Grant	7,437,284	7,511,156	-73,872	0.1
Business Rate Retention	49,722,205	25,681,261	24,040,944	93.6
Collection Fund Contribution	1,711,368	1,800,006	-88,638	-4.9
	<b>58,870,857</b>	<b>57,243,003</b>	<b>1,627,854</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Council Tax Requirement <sup>Note 3</sup></b>	<b>44,378,347</b>	<b>41,216,960</b>	<b>3,161,387</b>	<b>7.6</b>

<sup>Note 1</sup> 2016/17 Expenditure and Income has been restated for comparative purposes to include spend and income relating to the operation of the Mersey Gateway Bridge and Better Care Funding.

<sup>Note 2</sup> – From 01 April 2017 Halton Borough Council will be part of a pilot scheme operating 99% Business Rate Retention as opposed to the 49% scheme currently in operation. As a result Revenue Support Grant will no longer be payable by Government and will be replaced by additional funds retained from business rates.

<sup>Note 3</sup> – The increase in the council tax requirement is a combination of an increase of 4.9% to the council tax charge for the council and an increase of 870 (2.6%) 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:**  $\frac{44,378,347}{33,818} = \text{£}1,312.27$

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

	2017/18 £	2015/16 £	Difference £	%
<b>Halton's Band D Charge</b>	1,312.27	1,250.97	61.30	4.90
<b>The Police Authority's Band D Charge</b>	164.44	161.23	3.21	1.99
<b>The Fire Authority's Band D Charge</b>	73.29	71.86	1.43	1.99
<b>Total Council Tax Band D Charge</b>	<b>1,550.00</b>	<b>1,484.06</b>	<b>65.94</b>	<b>4.44</b>

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has 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 is the option of an adult social care authority being able to charge a "precept" of up to 3% on its council tax for the financial year 2017/18 without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting expenditure on adult social care.

In relation to the financial year beginning in 2017 the Secretary of State has determined (and the House of Commons has approved) a referendum principle of up to 5% (comprising 3% for expenditure on adult social care and 2% for other expenditure), for adult social care authorities. These authorities may therefore set council tax up to this percentage in 2017 without holding a referendum.

Properties in the parishes will be liable to pay an extra charge to cover the parish needs. The 2016/17 Tax Base, Precept, and Band D charge for each Parish are shown below.

Parish	Tax Base	Parish Precept		Band D Charge	Band D Charge	Difference
		2017/18 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2016/17 £	
Hale	662	26,250	26,131	39.65	39.65	0.00
Moore	328	4,526	4,498	13.80	13.80	0.00
Daresbury	174	4,596	4,200	26.41	26.42	-0.01
Preston Brook	332	11,000	9,150	33.13	27.23	5.90
Halebank	522	15,610	15,350	29.90	30.76	-0.86
Sandymoor	1,020	25,928	24,556	25.42	25.42	0.00
<b>Total precept</b>		<b>87,910</b>	<b>83,885</b>			

# 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](http://www.gov.uk).

For 2017/2018, the Government has set the standard non-domestic rating multiplier at **47.9** pence per £ of rateable value and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier will be **46.6** 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](http://www.voa.gov.uk). For further details, you can e-mail the VOA at: [ratingnorthwest@voa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto: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 occupied rate due, 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 and only vacant premises with a rateable value below £2,900 qualify for this exemption. This condition will continue to apply for the 2017/18 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](mailto:business.rates@halton.gov.uk), should you require any further information on any rating matters.

# ENVIRONMENT AGENCY NORTH WEST REGION

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

The Environment Agency is 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.

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

	2016/17 000's	2017/18 000's
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	£62,631	£76,100
<b>Levies Raised</b>	£3,785	£3,861
<b>Total Council Tax Base</b>	£2,039	£2,077

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 £3,784,975 in 2016/2017 to £3,860,675 for 2017/2018..

For further information you can visit [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or contact the Customer Help line: 08708 506 50, Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60, Floodline: 0845 988 1188.

## 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](http://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](http://www.halton.gov.uk/hep) or email: [hep@halton.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.halton.gov.uk/hpij) or call 0303 333 4300.

### Other sources of help include:

#### Citizens Advice Bureau

([www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) t: 08451 304055) can give you advice on managing your finances and any tax issues.

#### StepChange

([www.stepchange.org](http://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](http://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](mailto:council.tax@halton.gov.uk)

#### Business Rates:

Tel: 0151 511 8932

Email: [business.rates@halton.gov.uk](mailto:business.rates@halton.gov.uk)

#### Benefits:

Tel: 0151 511 7772

Email: [benefits@halton.gov.uk](mailto: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

# Support for the future of policing



**The 2017/18 budget will enable the Chief Constable to protect the public of Cheshire, protect front-line services and achieve the priorities of the Police & Crime Plan.**

The previous Chancellor's commitment to 'maintain overall police force budgets at current cash levels' has been confirmed by the current Chancellor and remains dependent upon Commissioners increasing their local council tax precept by up to 2% in each year through to 2020. However, the Government has not honoured this commitment as the Provisional Grant Settlement for Cheshire is lower than implied in 2015.

During my consultation with residents and businesses across Cheshire, there was strong support for a small increase in local contributions to support your police service. By increasing the police share of council tax by 6p per week, an additional £1.16m will be raised to support policing in Cheshire. As a result, the 2017/18 budget for the Constabulary is £193 million.

However, the increase in the police share of council tax does not cover the cost of inflation, existing commitments and priority developments. These additional costs, together with the net change in funding, will be met through efficiencies and savings of £5.4 million. This will enable investments for the upcoming financial year to meet the priorities detailed within the Police & Crime Plan 2016-21, priorities that were developed with residents of Cheshire every step of the way.

Cheshire residents have my commitment that I will remain focused on ensuring that your police service delivers value for money and will be taking a leading role in scrutinising how your money is spent.



**David Keane**

Police & Crime Commissioner  
for Cheshire



**David Keane**  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner  
for Cheshire

## Priority developments

Investments for the forthcoming year will focus on ensuring that our police service is ready to meet current and future challenges in a robust and sustainable way. This will assist to meet the vision for a police service focused on community policing, putting victims first.

- New and cutting edge technology supporting officers to spend more time within their communities and enhance public contact
- Provision of a modern, fit for purpose estate connected with our communities, in partnership with others where appropriate
- Investment in improving the safety of Cheshire's roads

- Cyber-crime – including data investigation and training both within the Constabulary, via the website and in the community
- Management of sexual and violent offenders to protect victims and prevent re-offending
- Continuing funding for Non-Recent Sexual Abuse Team to support victims of such abuse and bring those responsible to justice
- Support to give the public a voice in policing in Cheshire
- Supporting specials and volunteers such as rural watch and many others who provide their free time to support the policing of Cheshire and serve their communities

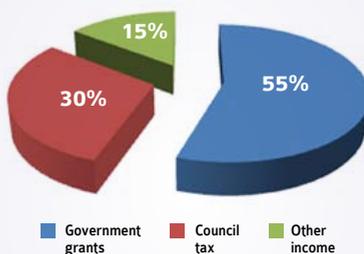
## Council tax bands for policing

Government has stipulated that any increase in the precept above 2% in Cheshire would require a countywide referendum which would incur considerable costs of £1.2 million to the public purse and any reduction in the precept would result in cuts to local police funding. As Commissioner, that this is something I am not comfortable with. Therefore, alongside strong public support, I have agreed to a 1.99% increase in the policing precept.

2017/18 police precept by council tax band

Band	£	Band	£
A	109.63	E	200.98
B	127.90	F	237.52
C	146.17	G	274.07
D	164.44	H	328.88

## Where does the funding come from?



Funding	£
Government grants	104,763,000
Council tax precept	60,147,000
Other income & specific grants	28,076,000
<b>Total funding and income</b>	<b>192,986,000</b>

## Want to know more



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

# Making Cheshire

**T**he construction of four new fire stations across Cheshire is well underway as part of ambitious plans to improve emergency response across the county.

The programme, which was the subject of widespread public consultation a few years ago, followed an in depth review of the Service. The total cost is around £16million with all the money coming from Government Grants or the Authority's own reserves.

Alsager Fire Station has already cemented itself as an important part of the community. The community station on Brookhouse Road was the first of the four new fire stations to be built. The new station, which is staffed by a crew of on-call firefighters, is now fully operational, responding to emergency incidents.

February saw the official opening of Penketh Fire Station located off Widnes Road. The station has two fire engines based there. One staffed by wholetime firefighters and the other by the new crew of on-call staff who have been recruited from the local area. In addition to providing an emergency response the station will also have a number of rooms available for use by members of the community.



Powey Lane Fire Station



Powey Lane Fire Station near Mollington has also begun responding to incidents. Unlike the Service's community fire stations this is an 'emergency response hub' housing traditional fire engines and a number of specialist vehicles to tackle specific emergencies across the county. The location near to the motorway network provides these vehicles with ready access to respond to other incidents across the whole of Cheshire.

# safer



Penketh Fire Station

Lymm Fire Station, is due to open later this year. It will provide full time cover and training facilities to ensure that firefighters continue to respond effectively to a variety of scenarios. In addition, Safety Central, the area's first purpose-built education and lifeskills facility will deliver educational programmes in an interactive way to ensure visitors to the centre take away important safety information.



Alsager Fire Station

## Cheshire Fire Authority

The Fire Authority manages the local fire and rescue service on behalf of the community. It comprises 23 councillors – eight from Cheshire East, seven from Cheshire West and Chester, five from Warrington and three from Halton.

### Representing

#### Halton

CLlr Phil Harris  
CLlr Stef Nelson  
CLlr Rob Polhill

### Meeting dates



Wed 14	June	2017
Wed 20	September	2017
Wed 6	December	2017
Wed 14	February	2018
Wed 25	April	2018

All meetings are open to the public, start at 10.30am and are held at the Service Headquarters in Winsford.

All reports and minutes are on the Service's website - [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)

## Facts and figures

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service operates:

- 28 Fire Stations
- 4 Community Safety Centres
- 3 Community Fire Protection Offices
- A Headquarters and training facility.

The Authority provides a 24 hour service to just over 1 million people and employs some:

- 678 operational staff
- 245 community safety and other support staff.



## Fire budget 2017–18

The Fire Authority has agreed that a budget of £41.3 million is required to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington areas for 2017–18.

A total of £26.45 million will need to be raised from local Council Tax, which is equivalent to £73.29 for each Band D dwelling. This is a rise of 1.99%, or 2.7p a week for a Band D home.

The budget equates to a cost per resident of just 76p per week.



Queries about this leaflet should be sent to: Head of Finance, CFRS Headquarters, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ  
t: 01606 868700 e: [feedback@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:feedback@cheshirefire.gov.uk)

## Estimated expenditure and income



	2017-18 £m	2016-17 £m
Pay related expenditure		
Firefighters	21.7	23.3
Other staff	8.1	7.7
Non-pay expenditure	13.0	12.6
Income	(1.5)	(1.5)
Budget requirement	<u>41.3</u>	<u>42.1</u>

## How the budget compared with last year



The Fire Authority budget requirement for 2017-18 is £41.3 million compared with a budget of £42.1 million for last year. The reasons for the 1.9% decrease in the overall budget are as follows:

	£m	% increase (decrease)
Last year's budget	42.09	
Pay and price inflation	0.66	1.6
Essential growth	1.19	2.8
Efficiencies and Savings	(2.28)	(5.4)
IRMP & Financing adjustments	(0.32)	(0.8)
Section 31 grants	(0.05)	(0.1)
Total	<u>41.29</u>	<u>(1.9)</u>

## Where the money will come from



	£m	£ Per Resident	£ Band D Equivalent
This year's budget	41.30	39.74	114.44
Less Government funding assessment and collection fund adjustment	(14.85)	(14.29)	(41.15)
Local Council Tax	26.45	25.45	73.29





# 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:

	<b>Halton Lea Shopping Centre</b>	<b>Widnes Brook Street</b>
<b>Monday</b>	9:00 – 17:30	9:00 – 17:30
<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00 – 17:30	9:00 – 17:30
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:00 – 17:30	9:00 – 17:30
<b>Thursday</b>	9:00 – 17:30	9:00 – 17:30
<b>Friday</b>	9:00 – 17:30	9:00 – 17:30
<b>Saturday</b>	9:00 – 13:00	9:00 – 13:00

## 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](http://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.