Serving Hampshire –
Balancing the Budget
Consultation

Consultation on Hampshire County Council’s financial options for 2018 – 2020

Information Pack
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Balancing the Budget
Consultation Information Pack

Consultation period: from midday on 3 July – 11.59pm on 21 August 2017

Introduction

Hampshire County Council is asking for residents’ and stakeholders’ views on ways it could balance its budget in response to continuing pressures on local government funding and still deliver core public services.

By April 2019, the County Council will be facing an anticipated budget shortfall of £140 million. This is due to national austerity measures, combined with demographic and inflationary pressures. With less money available and growing demand for council services, especially statutory services, tough decisions will need to be made about what the County Council can and cannot do in the future. The Authority is required by law to deliver a balanced budget and therefore, cannot plan to spend more than is available.

The County Council would like to hear your views on the following options for balancing its budget:

• reducing and changing services;
• introducing and increasing charges for some services;
• lobbying central Government for legislative change;
• generating additional income;
• using the County Council’s reserves;
• increasing Council Tax; and
• changing local government arrangements in Hampshire.

Feedback will help to inform the approach the County Council takes to balance its budget, up to 2019/20. These decisions could affect you – for example, in terms of how much Council Tax you pay, which council services you may receive in the future, and how services are delivered.
How to have your say

This Information Pack contains important information which the County Council recommends you read carefully before completing the accompanying Response Form.

To provide your feedback, please complete the Response Form available online at www.hants.gov.uk/consultations

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the Response Form by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or calling 0300 555 1375*. You can also email your response directly to Hampshire County Council using the email address insight@hants.gov.uk. The Information Pack and Response Form can also be requested in other formats, including Braille, audio or large print.

Please return paper Response Forms in the Freepost envelope provided. If you do not have a Freepost envelope, please post your response to: Freepost HAMPSHIRE

The consultation is open from midday on 3 July – 11.59pm on 21 August 2017.

Please note that responses received after this time will not be included in the findings report.

If you have any other queries about this consultation please contact the County Council by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or by calling 0300 555 1375*.

*Calls from a landline will be charged at the local rate, although mobile phone charges may vary

Hampshire County Council’s consultation policy

The County Council is committed to five principles of consultation:

• to consult on key issues and proposals;
• to consult in good time;
• to be inclusive but with clear and appropriate limits;
• to consult using clear, simple information; and
• to ensure responses are taken into account when decisions are made.
Section one
About the County Council

The County Council’s core role is to deliver public services to the 1.3 million residents of Hampshire (excluding Southampton and Portsmouth).

Responsibilities for local government services in Hampshire are divided between the County Council and the eleven district councils. There are also parish, town and neighbourhood councils, but not in all areas of the county. Police and Fire services are provided separately by Hampshire Constabulary and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The County Council is responsible for 81% of local government spending in Hampshire, which contributes to the delivery of a wide range of public services including: education, roads, waste disposal, libraries, countryside services, Public Health (including school nurses and health visitors) and social care for vulnerable adults and children. The County Council’s scale, capacity and expertise has enabled it to continue to deliver this breadth of services, whilst driving strong economic growth and prosperity.

Other public services, such as housing, local planning and bin collection, are carried out by district councils and therefore, fall outside the scope of this activity.

This consultation is about the services provided by the County Council only, and the budget that is used to run and deliver these services.

A summary of some of the services currently delivered through various departments in the County Council is set out below:

- **Adults’ Health and Care**
  Social care (for people aged over 18 years old) including: residential and nursing care; day care and respite facilities for older people (aged 65 or over); people with a learning disability, mental health needs or with a physical disability; and support for carers and for people to maintain their independence.

- **Children’s Services**
  Early years education and childcare; child protection, services for children in care; fostering and adoption services; support for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and their families; school admissions (applying for a school place); school places planning; support to pupils not in education, employment or training; school improvement; support for pupils with special educational needs; and home-to-school transport.

- **Corporate Services**
  Planning for emergencies; communicating to residents; managing grants to voluntary organisations; financial management; and legal and democratic support.
• **Culture, Communities and Business Services**
  Archives; country parks and public rights of way; libraries; Discovery Centres; museums and arts centres; registration of citizenship, births, marriages and deaths; and Trading Standards.

• **Economy, Transport and Environment**
  Economic development (supporting the local economy); transport and strategic infrastructure planning, new roads, footways and cycleways; highway repair and maintenance; street lighting; traffic management and road safety; household waste disposal and waste recycling centres (‘tips’); minerals and waste planning; flood risk management, protecting the environment; and public community transport subsidies.
Section two

About the County Council’s revenue budget

The County Council has an overall gross budget of £1.9 billion for the financial year of 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018. Nearly half of the gross budget is spent on schools, which is protected for that purpose only.

Since 2008, the County Council has been changing the way it works in order to respond to continuing pressures on local government funding and has made savings of over £340 million in the last nine years.

The financial strategy to-date has involved targeting resources on those who need them most, i.e. vulnerable children and adults, planning ahead and securing savings early, which has helped the County Council to invest in new, more efficient ways of working.

Each of the County Council’s departments has been required to reduce spending by the same proportion. This means that all departments have to find the same percentage spending reduction.

In addition, the careful use of reserves has helped to address gaps in funding and enabled the County Council to meet the cost of additional pressures in demand for some services, such as social care.

Specific measures have included:

• freezing Members’ allowances;
• sharing services with, and selling to, other public sector organisations to cover costs and generate income;
• charging people to use some services;
• utilising assets creatively to maximise return on investment;
• securing better value for money from contracts and when purchasing goods and services;
• adopting new and digital ways of working, and moving some services online to reduce costs;
• reducing senior management and staff costs;
• increasing the use of volunteers to support service delivery, such as libraries and countryside parks; and
• encouraging people to seek other forms of help and support to reduce the demand for some services.

The County Council has done its best to minimise the impact on frontline services, as far as possible, and keep Council Tax low. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult as the opportunities for reducing costs are getting harder to find, while demand for services continues to rise. That is why the County Council is seeking your views on potential ways forward for balancing its budget.
Section three

Options for balancing the budget

The County Council anticipates that it will have to reduce its spending by at least an extra £140 million by April 2019 to deliver a balanced budget. These savings are driven by national austerity measures; increases in demand for some services, reflecting changes in the county’s population; and inflationary pressures. This is almost the amount that the County Council currently spends on all of its services for children and young people (excluding schools).

The £140 million is based on what the County Council expects future funding cuts to be and assumes Council Tax will be increased in line with current Government policy.

Combined with the £340 million savings the County Council has already had to find since 2008, this will bring total reductions to nearly half a billion pounds. This represents the hardest financial challenge yet for the County Council, as each round of savings is becoming more and more difficult to achieve.

As a result, the County Council is having to consider more radical ways of making ends meet, including:

- reducing and changing services;
- introducing and increasing charges for some services;
- lobbying central Government for legislative change;
- generating additional income;
- using County Council's reserves;
- increasing Council Tax; and
- changing local government arrangements in Hampshire.
Reducing and changing services

The County Council could choose to reduce and change the way services are delivered in order to save money. Services fall into two main groups:

**Statutory services** – the County Council is required to provide statutory services by law, such as education, social services and roads. However, the County Council often goes above and beyond the statutory minimum of what is required and chooses to spend additional money so that more people can use the services, or help enhance the services that people receive.

The County Council could opt to reduce services back to the minimum level required by law.

**Non-statutory services** – these are services not required by law but still provided by the County Council. For example, local authorities are required to provide a library service but not necessarily a library. In other words, the service can be delivered in different ways. One option is to review these types of services to see if money could be saved by providing them differently, or at a more basic level.

Examples of possible ways that the County Council could reduce or change the level of service currently provided, in order to support future services, are set out below. **These are illustrative only** – any changes to specific services will be subject to further, more detailed consultation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>To reduce the cost of children’s social care by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Providing more targeted help to vulnerable children, particularly teenagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Intervening early to prevent the need for statutory care services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Investing in family-based interventions to enable children and young people to remain within family networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential impacts</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children’s social care resource would be tightly focused on the most vulnerable families only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater number of teenage children, and other children who would otherwise be in care, would be supported to remain with their family / family network / community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children’s social care workforce would be reduced and required to work more flexibly and efficiently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proposed, innovative changes to the delivery of social care would need to be fully tested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grant funding to voluntary and community organisations to support children and young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>To reduce the £750,000 grant funding awarded to 88 organisations to deliver community services for children and families across Hampshire to a minimum of £250,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Potential impacts        | • Capacity within the voluntary and community sector to support children and families, at a local level, could be reduced if funding cannot be found from other sources. This could make it more difficult to deliver proposed changes to children’s social care  
  
  • The role of Councils for Voluntary Service organisations in supporting voluntary and community groups to become more financially self-sufficient, could become greater  
  
  • The County Council would continue to provide grant funding to support Young Carers, in keeping with its statutory duty |

### Home to School Transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>To only provide the legal minimum for home to school transport, i.e. when a child aged under eight lives more than two miles from their nearest school, or when a child aged eight and over lives more than three miles away from their school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Potential impacts        | • Fewer Special Educational Needs (SEN) children being awarded transport under current discretionary exceptions criteria  
  
  • All discretionary transport arrangements would be determined annually, with parents having to re-apply each year  
  
  • More families of children with SEN would need to arrange their own transport to school |
### Children with disabilities

**Potential service change**

To reduce the cost of delivering support services to children with disabilities and their families by:

- Developing a more joined up service, involving different professionals, across children’s social care, adults’ social care and Public Health
- Enabling families to do more for themselves
- Providing access to personalised services for a set period of time

**Potential impacts**

- Service users would only need to tell their ‘story’ once
- Although services could continue to be provided, fewer families and carers may be able to access funding for short breaks and/or residential respite care placements for children with disabilities as they would be provided with alternative support arrangements
- Service users would be equipped to do more for themselves, supported in alternative ways
- Greater reliance on families and communities to support children, depending on their specific needs
- Service users could experience fewer difficulties when moving from being supported by children’s services to adults’ services
- Service users could benefit from faster access to support through more efficient decision making

### Education services

**Potential service change**

To reduce the cost of education support for some pupils by limiting the range of non-statutory services provided to:

- Young people aged 16+ who are not in education, employment or training
- Pupils educated at home
- Schools, regarding pupil exclusions

**Potential impacts**

- Young people may be less likely to return to education, employment or training
- Parents may be less able to access the full range of curriculum for children who are home educated
- Greater likelihood of more children being excluded from school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent living for older people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential service change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reduce the cost of care for older people by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Placing fewer adults into residential care homes on long-term placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investing more in <em>Extra Care</em> housing (accommodation with 24 hour support)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enabling people to do more for themselves and changing how ‘care at home’ support is provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential impacts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People would only receive residential care when this is essential – it would be targeted on the most vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More people could benefit from <em>Extra Care</em> housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service users would be equipped to do more for themselves, supported in alternative ways, and receive less funded support through ‘care at home’ services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater reliance on families and communities to support older, vulnerable people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service users may need to contribute more funding to meet the cost of the care and support they receive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults with learning disabilities and/or mental health support needs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential service change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To reduce the cost of services provided to adults with learning disabilities and/or mental health support needs by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investing more in supported living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating increased opportunities for employment and supported employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enabling people to do more for themselves and developing opportunities for people to find a greater level of support in their local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential impacts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fewer service users would be supported in residential care and day opportunities – as these services would be reduced and alternative provision identified for the most vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service users may need to contribute more to meeting the cost of the care and support they receive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential service change</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Potential impacts** | • All 48 County Council-run libraries would remain open  
• All libraries (apart from Winchester Discovery Centre) would close no later than 5pm Monday - Saturday and close all day on Sunday, when libraries are least used  
• Most libraries would see a reduction in opening hours of two to four hours a week to save costs, which equates to keeping five small libraries open - representing a 6.8% total reduction in opening hours  
• Customers would still be able to access a broad range of online resources 24/7 (which have seen an increase of over 20% in the last year) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street lighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential service change</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Potential impacts** | • Reduced energy used by street lights  
• Residential streets would be darker for drivers and pedestrians  
• Some full switching off of streetlights may occur, but this would be limited to the middle of the night, and only in certain locations  
• Brighter lighting may also be provided at specific times and locations, where needed  
• Road signs and markings would continue to be visible as they are retro-reflective and appear bright in vehicle lights |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School crossing patrols</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential service change</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Potential impacts** | • A reduction in the number of schools with a crossing patrol service  
• Schools and academies and/or local communities may decide to cover the cost – if County Council funding was removed |
### Kerbside recycling and treatments of waste

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>To either reduce costs or increase income by seeking opportunities to recycle more materials and to process waste in a different way. This includes attempting to maximise the amount of waste within the system that can be recycled, and improving the efficiency of waste management processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential impacts</td>
<td>• Variations may be needed to the types of waste collected from households so that householders are able to recycle more of their waste, and recycling rates in Hampshire improve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Household Waste Recycling Centres (also known as ‘tips’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>To close some, and/or alter, operating hours at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) or, <strong>subject to legislative change through Parliament</strong>, introduce a nominal fee for access to HWRC sites (currently not permitted by law)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential service change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Potential impacts        | • Some Hampshire residents may have to travel further to reach an HWRC site to dispose of their waste  
• Those sites that do remain open would be busier, although this could be mitigated through enhancements to these sites  
• Were a change in the law permitted, residents could be charged a nominal fee (£1-2 approximately), each time they accessed an HWRC site to deposit waste, meaning that sites would not need to be closed  
• In either case, residents may seek alternative disposal routes for their waste – for example hiring skips |
### Winter maintenance of highways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>Potential impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To repriorise activities, which would reduce the number of road routes that are routinely salted during winter months, in the event of forecast ice, frost or snow | • Salting activities would not happen on some Hampshire roads which are currently treated during the winter months  
• More of the Hampshire road network would be less accessible to vehicles during sub-zero weather conditions, and residents may have to make alternative travel arrangements  
• Salting activities on major roads carrying most traffic within Hampshire would not be impacted |

### Bus subsidies and community transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential service change</th>
<th>Potential impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To either reduce or stop providing:  
• Subsidies for bus routes which are commercially non-viable  
• Community transport services, including specific services for elderly and disabled residents, which are currently delivered in partnership with the voluntary sector and other funders | • Choice and/or frequency of bus services would be reduced, and some areas may lose public transport services  
• Residents living in rural and remote locations may become more reliant on private transport options  
• Elderly and disabled residents may need to find alternative access to public and other services  
• There may be greater demand for transport provision from community and voluntary providers, such as community car schemes  
• Some currently supported services may be retained by commercial operators without subsidies |
Introducing and increasing charges for some services

The County Council already charges for some local services, such as entry to local attractions and contributions towards care and support needs. However, the County Council could:

- **choose to increase some of these existing charges** – for example, requiring those who can afford to pay to make a greater contribution towards the costs of meeting their care and support needs; and/or
- **introduce new charges** in other services currently provided free of charge – for example, access to digital archives and records; activity sessions in libraries; and contributions to trips made with older persons’ concessionary fare passes (subject to change in legislation).

Any fees and charges would be aimed at recovering the costs of running the services only and not designed to make a profit.

There are other areas where the County Council would like to be able to introduce a charge in order to sustain services but is currently prohibited from doing so by legislation.

Lobbying central Government for legislative change

In some cases, central Government would need to amend legislation in order for local authorities to change the way some services are provided and enable charging in certain circumstances, in order for services to be sustained.

The County Council could choose to lobby central Government for these changes. Here are a few examples of where legislative change could help:

- allowing councils to charge, or apply a sliding scale of costs, for home to school transport for children who live more than three miles from their school could raise a potential £20 million per year;
- freeing up councils to charge residents to use local Household Waste and Recycling Centres could raise a potential of £2 million per year; and
- enabling councils to charge for concessionary fares, e.g. bus fares, could raise a potential £2.5 million to £5 million per year.
Generating additional income

The County Council also generates other income to help offset overall service costs. For example, selling support to schools, and specialist property and consultancy services to other organisations.

Some functions within the County Council are entirely funded through this type of income. However, there are limitations to how much income a local authority can generate.

In addition, the County Council invests in a wide range of properties across the country, through pooled funds. This approach poses less risk and supports a more stable financial return on investment, as opposed to speculating in individual properties or stocks and shares.

Funds are also generated through the sale of County Council owned land and assets. However, this cash return is one-off and therefore, does not offer a long-term solution to closing budget gaps.

Using the County Council’s reserves

Within the County Council’s budget are sums called ‘reserves’. On 31 March 2016, the reserves held by the County Council were £497.3 million. The County Council uses its available reserves to help manage shortfalls in funding - approximately £70 million is being been used for this purpose.

Reserves are also committed to other purposes such as:

- the building of new schools, roads and other facilities;
- the redesign of services to make them more cost effective and sustainable;
- new technology to deliver more modern and efficient services; and
- contingencies and unforeseen financial events.

The County Council could use more reserves to plug the budget gap but as reserves can only be spent once, they would merely provide a temporary fix. This would do nothing more than delay and possibly worsen, inevitable decisions needed to solve the County Council’s longer-term financial challenges.

It would also mean that funding would not be available for the areas listed above.
Increasing Council Tax

The County Council could choose to increase Council Tax to help plug the anticipated financial gap. Over half of the funding for services in Hampshire (excluding schools and Public Health) comes from Council Tax (58%).

About Council Tax in Hampshire

The County Council has one of the lowest levels of Council Tax in the country. For six years up to 2015/16, Council Tax was held at the same level. This was in line with central Government policy at the time, and the County Council received some one-off funding from central Government to make up, in part, for the lost income.

In 2016/17, central Government changed its policy. Instead of encouraging councils to keep Council Tax at the same level, central Government also gave councils like Hampshire, with adult social care responsibilities, permission to raise Council Tax by a further 2% to fund adult social care. Government adjusted funding to councils based on an expectation that local authorities would increase Council Tax by the full amount, 1.99%. As a result, for 2016/17, the County Council set a Council Tax increase of 3.99%, in line with Government policy (2% plus 1.99%).

In 2017/18, Council Tax was increased again in line with central Government policy and included another amount for funding adult social care costs. Even after these increases, Council Tax in Hampshire is still lower in real terms than five years ago, when taking into account the rate of inflation.

For 2018/19, the County Council currently assumes that central Government’s policy on Council Tax will stay the same.

An added complication is that while the expected average increase between 2016 and 2019 is 3.99%, the County Council accepted a central Government option to bring forward part of that increase (1%) in 2017/18. The County Council could choose to do the same next year - so the increase would be 4.99% in 2018/19 (as shown in the table over the page). This would mean that the County Council would only be able to increase Council Tax by 1.99% in 2019/20, without a referendum. However, the average remains the same – 3.99% over the period.

Assuming this position, the County Council would still face a budget gap of £140 million by 2019. Consequently, it could choose to raise Council Tax further next year – even to the point of increasing rates to meet the full savings required.

A Council Tax rise above the central Government’s limit would require a public referendum. For every 1% increase in Council Tax, the County Council would receive around £5.67 million a year.

Alternatively, the County Council could reduce the planned levels of Council Tax rises but that would lead to an increase in savings required on top of the existing £140 million gap.

In summary, the budget gap of £140 million is based on an expectation that Council Tax will go up by an average of 3.99% per year for the three-year period (2016-2019). To close the gap through Council Tax would need increases well above 3.99%. Any increase above 3.99% legally requires a public referendum.
The table below is for illustration only. It demonstrates the amount of money that would still need to be saved after each level of Council Tax increase, showing that current assumed increases would not be sufficient for the County Council to balance its budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage increase in Council Tax for 2018/19</th>
<th>Additional Council Tax income generated in 2018/19</th>
<th>Level of expected savings still needed by 2019/20</th>
<th>Impact on Band D Council Tax annual bill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£168.3 million</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>£5.67 million</td>
<td>£162.7 million</td>
<td>+£11.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.99%</td>
<td>£11.3 million</td>
<td>£157.0 million</td>
<td>+£22.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.99%</td>
<td>£22.6 million</td>
<td>£145.7 million</td>
<td>+£45.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.99% (assumed in budget forecasts)</td>
<td>£28.3 million</td>
<td>£140 million</td>
<td>+£56.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% (a referendum would be required)*</td>
<td>£56.7 million</td>
<td>£111.6 million</td>
<td>+£113.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.7% (a referendum would be required)**</td>
<td>£168.3 million</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>+£336.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If the County Council increased Council Tax by 10%, a resident of a Band D property would pay £1,246 per year. This would be lower than the average Band D rate across all other county authorities, assuming they only increased Council Tax by 4.99%.

** As shown, in order to fully cover the £140 million financial gap through Council Tax, an increase of 29.7% would be required. As such, the County Council is not minded to put this to a public referendum.
Changing local government arrangements in Hampshire

Following an independent review of local government arrangements in Hampshire, the County Council consulted the public last year on different ways that councils in Hampshire could change, or be reorganised, to help sustain the delivery of core public services in the future. Please see www.hants.gov.uk/servinghampshire for more information about the consultation and independent review.

Different options for changing local government arrangements in Hampshire outlined in the independent review identified ways for how a minimum of £40 million savings per year could be achieved by, for example: removing duplication across the 12 existing councils; having fewer councillors and senior managers; reducing back office functions; disposing of surplus buildings and equipment; and finding opportunities for economies of scale in purchasing goods and services.

Changes to the structure of local government in Hampshire would require a decision by central Government and a period for implementation. As a result, savings would not be realised until after April 2020.

The County Council’s current policy position is clear. The Full Council agreed in November 2016 that it remains committed to try to make the two tier system of local government in Hampshire work and to avoid re-organisation, if possible. The County Council would prefer to hold this position, but acknowledges that it may be subject to external factors, including central Government decisions and financial circumstances.
Thank you for reading through this Information Pack.

You are invited to give your views on the various options available to the County Council for balancing its budget. You can do this by using the online Response Form at: www.hants.gov.uk/consultations

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the Response Form by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk or calling 0300 555 1375*. You can also email your response directly to Hampshire County Council using the email address insight@hants.gov.uk.

The Information Pack and Response Form can also be requested in other formats, including Braille, audio or large print.

Your feedback will help to inform the decisions to be made by Hampshire County Council in autumn 2017 on the approach to balancing its budget up to 2019/20.

*Calls from a landline will be charged at the local rate, although mobile phone charges may vary
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