

## **Christchurch Borough Council**

This section explains some of the financial information relating to Council Tax with specific relevance to the Christchurch Borough Council area. It shows how the Council's budget is allocated and compares this year's expenditure to last year's.

As well as paying for services from your local borough council as outlined on this page, the Council Tax you pay goes towards paying for services provided by Dorset County Council, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority and Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner.

### **Why Council Tax Has Changed**

Christchurch Borough Council is sensitive to the strength of public feeling relating to increases in taxation. However, the Council is facing significant financial challenges in setting the annual budgets due to reductions in Government funding and exposure to risks concerning the Localisation of Council Tax Support and Retention of Business Rates.

Christchurch Borough Council no longer receives any central Government support in the form of Revenue Support Grant. For comparison, the Council received £1,307,000 Revenue Support Grant in 2013/14. In addition to the cessation of Government support through Revenue Support Grant, the Government has announced that as part of the national deficit reduction programme this Council will pay over a contribution of £375,000 to Central Government from 2019/20.

The funding pressures that the Council faces and will continue to face are significant. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy projects further savings required of £133,000 in 2019/20 in order to balance the books, with total savings of £600,000 required over the next five years. Should the Government continue to reduce the resources available to lower tier councils this forecast position will deteriorate.

Christchurch is increasing its Council Tax by £5.83 (2.99%) for a Band D property for 2018/19 as a result of the financial challenges it faces. This equates to an increase of 11 pence per week for a Band D property. A Band D property in Christchurch will pay £200.82 for Christchurch's element of their Council Tax bill. The Government is no longer offering councils grants to freeze their Council Tax.

Despite the financial challenges the Council remains ambitious and will continue to seek opportunities to provide further resilience to its financial position in order that services are protected.

At the time of setting the Council Tax for 2018/19 the Council awaits the final decision from the Secretary of State on whether they support local government reorganisation in Dorset from 1 April 2019. If local government

reorganisation does go ahead then two new unitary authorities would be created from the existing nine Councils in Dorset with the aim of achieving efficiencies in the provision of public services in Dorset.

### **Spending on Major Projects**

The Council plans to spend £6.1m on major projects over the next five years. This includes £2.3m investment in community & leisure facilities in the Borough, £2.3m on maintaining the Council's assets including £0.8m on car parks, £1.1m on affordable housing and temporary accommodation and £0.4m on coast protection.