



News Release

Communications and Media Team

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Funding Services in the South Hams

14 February 2017

South Hams District Council has this month set its budget for the next financial year.

With a commitment to protect frontline services where possible, even in the wake of cuts in Government grants, Councillors have reluctantly agreed to increase their portion of Council Tax.

This is a pattern which is being echoed by many of the other providers that Council Tax funds. Of the money that South Hams District Council collects in Council Tax, only 9% goes to services provided by South Hams, the rest goes to Devon County Council, the local Town or Parish Councils, and the Fire and Police services.

At a full Council meeting, Councillors voted to increase their portion of Council Tax by the maximum amount allowed in any one year. This equates to £5 for a band D property. For the next financial year that is a 3.3% increase to £155.42.

At the same time they agreed a Capital Programme, which included a Community Reinvestment Fund to support communities where significant housing development has taken place; funding for Disabled Facilities Grants to support people living independently in their own homes and additional investment in play equipment for parks across the District.

A Spokesperson for South Hams District Council said: "We know that our main

funding grant will disappear completely by 2018 and we are exploring many different options for how we can generate our own income and continue to fund services.

"The Council has already identified savings of just under £880,000 for 2017/18 on its net budget of £8.3million.

"In the meantime, increasing Council Tax, while never popular, is one way that we can continue to deliver important service that our communities need.

"This has been a challenging year but we have met it with some very robust forward planning that has allowed us to ease the pressures on frontline services and will enable us to deliver a strong Capital Programme this year that will benefit the people in our communities."

Currently, councils receive their funding from three main sources: Central Government Grants, Council Tax and Business Rates.

Before Christmas the Council received confirmation from Central Government that it has been accepted for a four year financial settlement up until 2020.

It also confirmed that South Hams District Council's funding from the Central Government Grant and Business Rates will be reducing by a further 39% between now and 2019/20. The Council will then be facing a budget gap over the next two years of £0.6 million.



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Let's Talk about Dogs – Your Chance to Have Your Say

South Hams District Council wants to hear your views on current Dog Control Orders within your Parish.

Along with other councils across the country, South Hams are reviewing existing Dog Control Orders. These orders include when and where a dog should be on, or off, a lead, such as in car parks or shopping streets.

The Council has just opened a consultation for six weeks and would like to hear your views. They want to know if the current access and facilities available for dog walkers will remain adequate for the next three years.

Other Dog Control Orders include which areas dogs are restricted from, such as enclosed play parks and beaches. Where dogs are allowed, they must be under control and owners must pick up after them.

Cathy Aubertin, SHDC Operational Manager for Environment Services, said:

"We want to know from residents if the current Control Orders in their areas are satisfactory. We urge them to look at the existing Dog Control Orders and then let us know what their thoughts are."

Are the current Control Orders appropriate in your area? To view a summary of existing Dog Control Orders and to comment, please visit:

<http://www.southhams.gov.uk/dogcontrol>

Comments received through the consultation process will be considered by the Council before the strategy is finalised and presented for adoption.