**2017/18 Council Tax billing**

1. **Why has the Council increased its Council Tax?**

* The Council recognised that many people in the borough face hardship and so sought to limit the increase to 4.99% for all Council’s services.
* This is 1.99% for Council Services and 3% for Adult Social Care.
* This decision has been made following significant core funding cuts from Government, with significant savings needing to be found in the next 3 years.
* The Council also recognises that many services must continue to be provided by the Council, especially universal services such as;
* waste collection,
* road maintenance,
* parks
* specialist services for vulnerable children and adults

• The Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester has increased their precept by 3.18%

* The Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority has increased their precept by 1.99%
* The Key Decision to increase Council Tax was agreed by Full Council on the 28 February 2017.

1. **Are other authorities increasing Council Tax?**

* Each Council will decide separately on the level of council tax that is appropriate.
* All Councils across Greater Manchester are charging the Adult Social Care Precept.

1. **What is the Adult Social Care Precept?**

* The Government has made a new offer to adult social care authorities, which includes Tameside, for 2017/18.
* 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 beginning April 2017.
* Tameside has agreed to take up this offer.
* The precept is to assist the authority in meeting expenditure on adult social care. The cost of care is increasing due to the aging population of the authority.
* The precept is an integral part of the Council Tax bill and legislation does not permit a tax payer to opt out of this charge, the bill must be paid in full.

1. **Why is the increase in the Adult Social Care Precept higher than 3%?**

* Legislation is such that the Adults Social Care increase of 3% is based on the overall total of last year’s Council Tax bill (excluding any benefit that may be in payment) and not just the Adults Social Care element.
* Examples of the calculation can be found on the FAQs on the website under the heading “Calculation on Council Tax Bills 2017/18”
* Legislation states the way the Adult Social Care Precept is calculated and how it must be shown on the Council Tax Bill.
* Queries regarding the calculation or the layout of the bill should be made to the Department for Communities and Local Government. Their email address is <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/>

1. **Why are there differing charges and increases on my council bill?**

Council Tax is made up of the following elements:

Properties other than in Mossley

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * The charge for Council services | 1.99% |
| * A precept for Adult Social Care | 3.0%  4.7% increase overall |
| * A separate precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester | 3.18% |
| * A separate precept for the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority. | 1.99% |

Properties in Mossley

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * The charge for Council services | 1.99% |
| * A precept for Adult Social Care | 3.0% |
| * A separate precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester | 3.18%  4.6% increase overall |
| * A separate precept for the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority. | 1.99% |
| * Mossley Parish Council | **Less** 2.55% |

1. **What is the reference to a referendum?**

* The government has set out rules which determine the limits for council tax rises and the way this is to be calculated and reviewed to ensure the Council acts properly.
* In relation to the financial year beginning April 2017, Government have approved a referendum principle increase of 5% - comprising
* a 3% increase for expenditure on adults social care, and
* a 2% increase for Council expenditure.
* The Council may therefore increase Council Tax up to the level of 4.99% without holding a referendum.
* Tameside have set an increase of 4.99% for its own services, which is below the limit for a referendum.

1. **Can you still pay Council Tax by paypoint?**

* From July 2017 payment at Paypoint outlets will no longer be available and you will need to make alternative arrangements to pay your bill.
* Please see the reverse of your Council Tax bill for alternative ways to pay or visit our website [www.tameside,gov.uk](http://www.tameside,gov.uk) where you can make a payment on-line, set up a direct debit or find advice on other ways to pay.

1. **I would like to set up a Direct Debit.**

* Please can you complete the online Direct Debit on the Tameside website, Council Tax and Benefits, click ‘self-service’ and chose ‘pay by Direct Debit’.
* This will be completed within 5 working days of the form being submitted.