

Fact sheet on the our budget and Council Tax for 2018/19

Our Grow Save Charge business plan was first introduced in 2013 to address reductions in Government grant funding without the need to make cuts to services.

Other than stopping the food waste collection service which was expensive and not well used, there have been no significant reductions in our services since 2010 when the Government grant started to reduce.

Instead, we have focussed on shared services and joint working, notably with Malvern Hills District Council, other efficiency savings and growing alternative income streams.

These income streams include extra business rates where we now retain 40% of the growth, before levies, Council Tax growth and New Homes Bonus. Additional business rates income to us is now £750,000 per year.

We have also increased the number of garden waste customers and now have income approaching £900,000 per year from this.

Our new waste contract due to start in April 2018 will see service improvements and savings of around £500,000 per year. The new Evesham Waitrose store will bring in a rental stream of £500,000 per year after an initial rent free period.

These and other savings, largely as a result of Grow Save Charge, have enabled us to continue to provide good services whilst Government grant is reducing. In fact, all of this good housekeeping was producing a small surplus in 2018/19.

We have therefore chosen to freeze our share of the Council Tax in 2018/19. We recognise that we must only increase our Council Tax when it is absolutely necessary to do so. The previously proposed 2% increase (equivalent to £2.40) on the current band D Council Tax of £120.08 would have generated £119,000 in 2018/19.

We have also found money from this budgeted surplus to pay for some additional promises in 2018/19. An extra £35,000 will be set aside to pay for a campaign to reduce litter and use of plastics; increasing the number of new apprenticeships in Wychavon; tackling social mobility; and launching a village of culture competition. More money is available in future years for these initiatives.

In summary, good financial management, efficiency savings and our growth strategy have allowed us to meet the challenges of reduced Government grant. Furthermore, the healthy position next year provides the opportunity to fund new initiatives and freeze the Council Tax.