

Leader's message

Setting this year's budget has been especially challenging as we look to balance competing demands for finite resources. It means we've had to make some tough decisions and we know that we can't please everyone, but we have worked hard to be fair and to focus resource where it is needed most.

We are committed to improving the borough for everyone through initiatives such as improving air quality and our community parks programme, while at the same time looking to focus the resources we have on supporting those people who need us most. We won't always deliver services in the ways we have in the past - and we want to work with residents, communities and businesses to shape how we do things in the future. We are determined to include people from the start in new and different ways.

We know this will be difficult as local government has borne the brunt of spending cuts and Kingston has been hit especially hard. We no longer receive any general funding from central Government, this has been reducing since 2010 when we received £66m.

Alongside these reductions to our funding, the demand on our services is greater than it's ever been and inflation is adding to the costs.

This adds to the pressure on council services, particularly those that support the most vulnerable. Over the next four years the demand for Adult Social Care is forecast to cost over £7m more than we currently spend. More people are living longer, which is to be celebrated. However this means that when they require our help they are often living with more complex needs.



Added to this, the number of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) needing support continues to be a challenge both locally and nationally. As does protecting children at risk of abuse and neglect.

However, we are a new council administration with a clear vision. We are putting our finances on a sustainable footing with this budget. It will not be easy and we are more reliant on local sources of funding, for example council tax, business rates and income we can generate.

The decision to raise council tax is difficult and isn't taken without a great deal of thought, but given the limited ways of raising funds and the need to budget in a responsible way, we have little choice but to ask residents to pay a bit more for the services we deliver to everyone. On average that's about £1.40 a week extra.

Although we need to make savings, we'll still be investing a further £3.8m in vital services and delivering the key commitments we have promised. We're planning for the future by putting an additional £3.5m into our reserves to deal with known and unexpected pressures and to protect ourselves from previous years of overspending in SEND services. As well as around half a million pounds as a contingency for issues arising from Brexit.

We will focus on the services that our residents rely on, particularly supporting the vulnerable which includes building a new dementia home and bidding for a new special needs school. We're also committed to improving the environment for everyone - planting more trees, working to increase recycling rates, improving air quality through encouraging sustainable forms of travel and providing more affordable housing through council building projects.

Although it's tough, we have tried to be fair, ensuring we have a sustainable budget focusing investment where we can make a difference for people who need us most, improving our environment and including communities in shaping the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Green". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Liz Green, Leader of Kingston Council

This year in numbers

To help us meet the needs of a growing population and offset reducing funding from government, we have increased council tax for 2019-20 by 2.99%. We've also followed the Government's policy which allows councils to collect more council tax to help meet the increasing cost of Adult Social Care. This is called the Adult Social Care Precept and will be an additional 2%. The total rise of 4.99% means that residents in a Band D property* will pay £1.40 extra per week on average. This is £73.73 per year.



£0m

Kingston no longer receives any general funding from Government.

This has been reducing since 2010 when we received £66m.

£12.1m

savings required in 2019-20



£1,551.19



Our 2019/20 annual Band D council tax rate*

40%



The share of our budget spent on Adult Social Care (including community housing)

23%



The share of the budget spent on Children's Services. A further £139.4m is spent funding local schools and providing support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

* Please note that this figure will be slightly more if you live in the Wimbledon or Putney Commons areas and does not include the portion of council tax that we collect on behalf of the Greater London Authority, which sets its own council tax rate.

What we spend our money on



£54.6m

Adult Social Care (including community housing)

£32.1m

Children's Services



£0.7m

Growth (includes planning, regeneration and housing development)

£1.4m

Chief Executive's Department (central services)



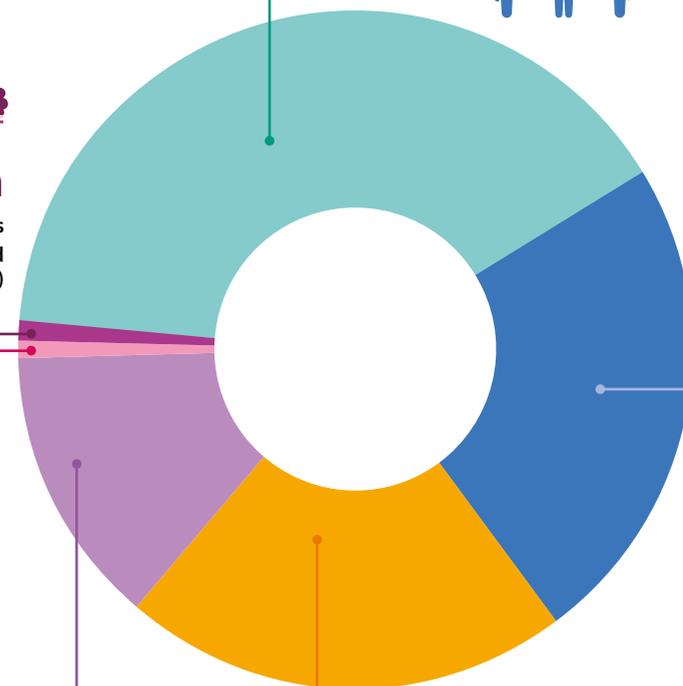
£18.1m

Communities (includes customer services, community engagement, environment and culture)



£29.4m

Corporate and Commercial (includes contracts such as parking, waste and leisure)



*The Growth Directorate also has a net income of £1.8m from Property Services.

Where our revenue comes from



£97.4m
COUNCIL TAX (79.5%)



£25.2m
BUSINESS RATES (20.5%)

*These figures exclude fees, charges and specific grants.

Kingston Pound our circular economy



What is Kingston Pound?

Kingston Pound is Kingston's local currency. It brings more business to the independent traders of Kingston, strengthens the local economy and helps to keep our high streets alive. It works electronically via an app on your phone, as well as existing physically.

To find out how to convert your sterling to Kingston Pounds and which local businesses accept them visit our website kingstonpound.org



All money exchanged to **Kingston Pounds** is held in the Kingston Pound Association bank account with Boom (previously Surrey Save Credit Union), a local and ethical bank covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme FSCS. K£1 is equal to £1
kingstonpound.org Email: andrew@kingstonpound.org [@kingstonpound](https://twitter.com/kingstonpound) [/KingstonPound](https://www.facebook.com/kingstonpound)

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING IN KINGSTON?



Inspiring and supporting volunteering

Find out more at
www.volunteeringkingston.org.uk

Volunteering Kingston is the service for volunteers and active citizens within the borough. Whether you live, work or study in Kingston, the team supports all aspects of volunteering, including:

- Helping individuals to register and become volunteers and active citizens.
- Assisting charities, organisations, public and private sector to involve volunteers.
- Organising quality volunteering placements supporting local charities and causes.

About our borough

We have a growing population in Kingston, which has increased by

20,000 since 2011 to
179,600 this year



Older people

Our elderly population (65+) was **24,300**
in 2018 and is projected to reach **32,000** by 2030



The total number of people  estimated to have dementia in Kingston equates to **one in 14** older adults.

Learning disabilities

 **3,233** adults have a learning disability of some type in Kingston. This is likely to increase by **20%** by **2030**

Sustainable transport and parks

There are around **30km** of cycle routes within the borough being upgraded and joined up by the Go Cycle Programme (funded by TfL).

We maintain **31 parks** and open spaces and **24 playgrounds** across the borough.



Children and young people

There are **3,577** children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged

0 to 25 in Kingston

32% have an education, health and care plan – an increase of **8.8%** in **2017/18**



What we're spending the money on



✓ supporting people with learning disabilities to live independently

✓ more help for children with special educational needs and disabilities in mainstream schools



✓ building a new dementia care home

✓ providing more affordable housing through council building projects



✓ increasing electric vehicle charging points

✓ cutting emissions



✓ increasing recycling

✓ planting more trees



✓ outreach for children's services

✓ community rangers



Your council tax questions answered



How is my council tax broken down and what's changed this year?

Your council tax is made up of two elements:

- Kingston Council expenditure – e.g. social care, waste collection, libraries
- Greater London Authority (GLA) expenditure – e.g. Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and the Fire Brigade.

In line with national government policy, we have taken the decision to raise council tax by 2.99% and support Kingston's vulnerable and ageing population by levying a Adult Social Care Precept of 2%.

We also collect council tax on behalf of the GLA, which has set a rise of 8.9%, 50p a week. You can find out more about the GLA and its plans for the forthcoming year at www.kingston.gov.uk/GLA.



I hardly use any council services – why do I pay the same as those who do?

Council tax is not a direct bill for services; you're paying for the cost of maintaining society's essential services and ensuring that we can support the most vulnerable among us. In total, over 60% of our budget is spent on helping vulnerable people, including the elderly and children. Our single biggest expense is Adult Social Care, which accounts for over 40% of our budget.

We are a community – collectively caring for all our residents.

Get involved

We are focusing on strengthening the relationship between the council and the community and want to involve you in the design of local services and the things that affect you most. We are looking at doing this in new ways and would welcome your views. If you're interested in getting involved please let us know at **www.kingston.gov.uk/get-involved**

Contacting your local councillor

If you'd like to ask your local councillor a question, you can find all their details on our website **www.kingston.gov.uk/councillors**

Coming soon...

Kingston's local plan – We have a growing population who need new homes, and for a thriving economy we need new jobs. For our quality of life we need great parks and open spaces, better transport and sufficient health and education services. The local plan is our blueprint for how to achieve this, whilst enhancing what we already have in our borough. To get involved, please visit **www.kingston.gov.uk/newlocalplan**

If you have difficulty reading this document because of a disability, we can help you. Please call our Contact Centre on 020 8547 5000, or ask someone to call on your behalf.

More information and a full list of frequently asked questions about council tax and Kingston Council's budget can be found at **www.kingston.gov.uk/counciltax**.

