



# Bristol's Budget

2020-21

transport  
adult social care  
air quality  
street cleaning  
housing  
waste  
electoral services  
children's services  
libraries  
climate change  
museums  
planning

## Consultation survey

Bristol City Council is consulting on the level of Council Tax for 2020/21.  
You can complete this survey online at

[bristol.gov.uk/budget2020-2021](https://bristol.gov.uk/budget2020-2021)

or return this paper version using the Freepost envelope in this booklet.

**Please give us your views by 4 December 2019.**



# Council Tax Consultation 2020/21

Bristol City Council is consulting on the level of Council Tax for next year (2020/21). We would like your views on whether, and if so by how much, we should increase Council Tax to pay for general services and adult social care. This will help us when we decide the level of Council Tax and the council's budget in February.

Please read the information below and answer the questions and return this survey to us by 4 December using the Freepost envelope. You do not have to answer all the questions if you do not want to.

## Overview

Every February, the council sets a budget for the next year which details how much money we will be able to spend on each of the services the council provides.

Bristol is an ambitious city with future plans set out in the **One City Plan**<sup>1</sup> published in January 2019. Bristol City Council has high aspirations for the future and a track record of seeking to maintain services in new and improved ways at a lower cost whilst investing in the future. We want Bristol to thrive and continue to be a great place in which to live and work.

## Spending on services

We spend around **£1 billion each year providing a range of services to the people of Bristol.**

The money the council has to spend on delivering day-to-day services to citizens is called the **revenue budget**. A third of this budget is raised locally through Council Tax and Business Rates:

- **20% (£215 million)** from Council Tax
- **13% (£134 million)** from Business Rates

The remaining **67% (£705 million)** funding comes from grants from the government (such as schools funding) and other income such as fees and charges we make for some of the services we provide. You can read more about some of the grants and other income that make up our revenue budget in the **'Further information'** section on pages 10 and 11.

Most people use a council service every day. Schools, adult or children's social care, health protection, emptying of bins, recycling and leisure facilities such as parks and libraries are just some of the many services meeting people's daily needs. We must ensure these services are sustainable.

Of the £215 million raised each year from Council Tax, *Figure 1 (on page 3)* shows how much we spend per household on these services in Bristol.



## Capital investment in services

As well as funding day-to-day services from our revenue budget<sup>2</sup>, we need to ensure effective services for the future. Capital expenditure is money we spend to build physical things (such as housing, schools, roads and footpaths) which will last for a long time and may generate income. We have a five-year capital investment programme to 2023 of approximately £900 million. This investment will help meet the city's aspirations and sustain economic growth.

You can read more about the capital programme in the **'Further information'** section on pages 10 and 11.

## Funding uncertainty

**The council faces uncertainty over the level of funding it will receive in the future.**

### Government spending round 2019

The Government's recent spending round, announced in September 2019, committed additional funding to key public services including Education and Adult Social Care. It also enabled councils to generate more funding from local taxation. A government-led consultation is currently underway on how the additional funding will be distributed – until then we won't know for certain how much funding the council has.

1. One City Plan – [www.bristolonecity.com/one-city-plan/](http://www.bristolonecity.com/one-city-plan/)  
2. Revenue budget is the money available to the council to spend on delivering day-to-day services to the citizens of Bristol.

## Fair Funding Review and Business Rates

The government is also looking to reform how future funding is allocated via the Fair Funding Review (which aims to set the amount of funding for each council based on its spending needs and ability to raise money) and business rates for 2021/22 and beyond.

### Future grant funding

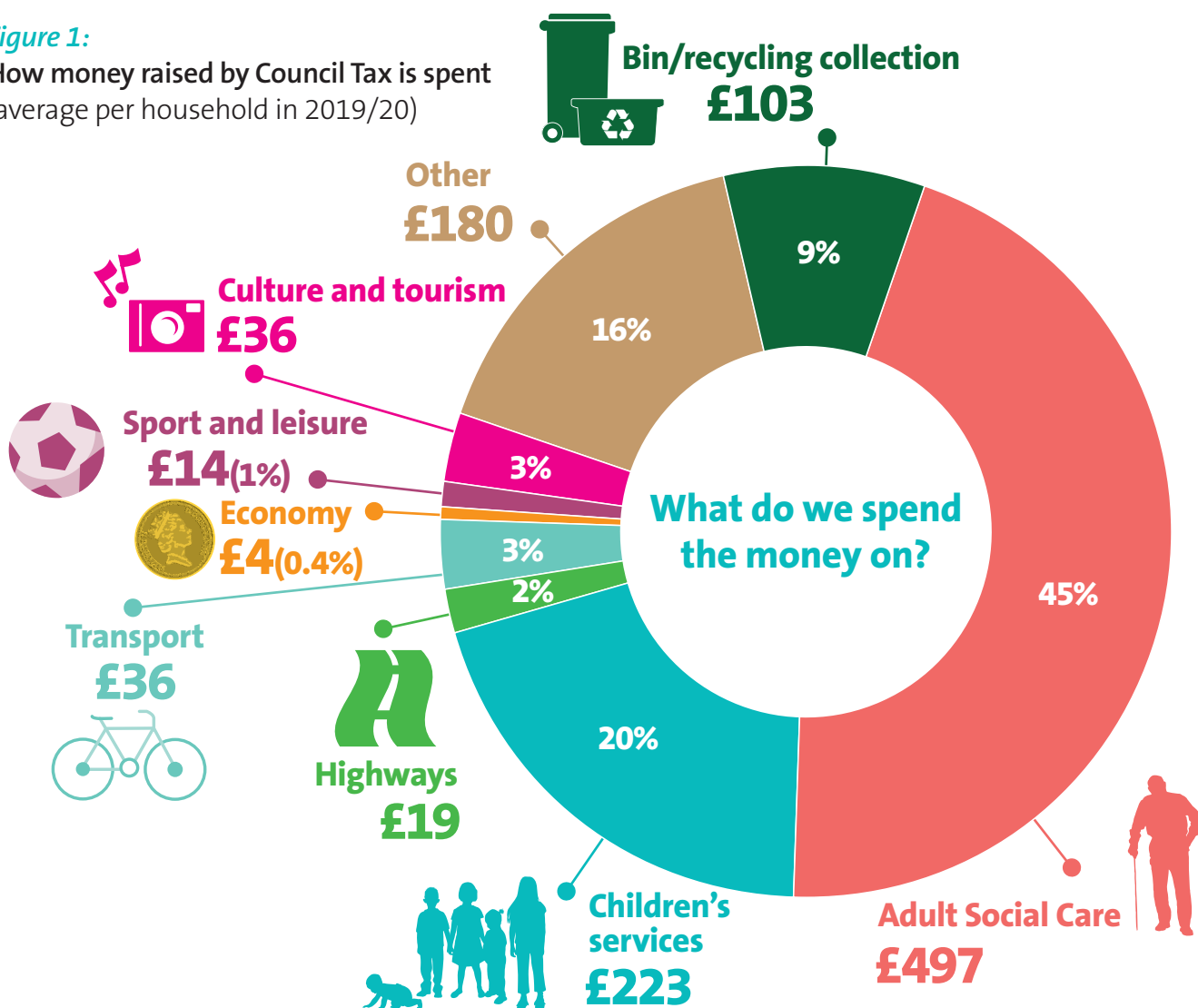
We also receive grant funding from central government and the EU for services such as Schools, Education, Early Years & Child Care, High Needs including Special Educational Needs and Disability, Public Health and Homelessness. There are uncertainties around the level of grant funding that will be available to the council in the future. Furthermore, in many cases the existing funding is not enough to cover the increasing demand year-on-year for these services; therefore any costs that cannot be covered by the overall funding provided will potentially have to be paid for through Council Tax funding.

## Getting the balance right

As with most things in life, setting the budget and the Council Tax is about getting a balance, in this case by providing the services and improvements that Bristol people need and cherish while offering the best value for money. However, prices increase, the population grows and we see an ever-increasing demand for our services. Services such as adult social care, children’s services (including services for children with additional or special educational needs and disabilities) and homelessness support are under immense pressure. Funding these services properly is important to safeguard our most vulnerable citizens.

We are continuing to work hard to ensure we are able to provide sustainable funding for Bristol and will continue our work to make sure services are good value for money. We will explore all of the funding options available to us to ensure we have sufficient funding to meet our budget requirement for 2020 and beyond.

**Figure 1:**  
How money raised by Council Tax is spent  
(average per household in 2019/20)



## Why not use our reserves?

It has been suggested that the council could use its reserves instead of increasing Council Tax. There are good reasons not to do this.

Reserves are one-off and cannot provide ongoing base funding. Reserves are meant to be there for emergencies and we need to ensure that the level of reserves held by the council during periods of uncertainty is sufficient to manage any shocks. This is important, given recent reports that a number of local authorities could be at risk of exhausting their reserves and face deeper cutbacks to essential services.

The table on the next page shows how much money would be raised by various increases in Council Tax (including any Adult Social Care Precept) and how much extra it would add to a Council Tax bill per year and per week.

## What we are proposing

**Council Tax is an important source of income to the council. We are conscious of the impact of Council Tax increases on Bristol residents. At the same time we recognise that people rely on the services we provide and value the environment in which we live. This provides a difficult balancing act between Council Tax increases, reductions in the services we provide and how we look to generate income.**

We are consulting on options for the level of Council Tax increase next year (from April 2020-March 2021) to help cover some of the existing and emerging financial pressures the council faces in delivering services. The options range from making no change to a 2% increase in the amount you pay for general council services (the services shown in Figure 1) plus a further option to add up to 2% more towards the cost of adult social care. (This extra amount for adult social care is referred to by the government as an Adult Social Care Precept).

If the council raises Council Tax by 4% (2%<sup>3</sup> rise in Council Tax and 2% Adult Social Care Precept) this would raise an extra £8.8 million in 2020/21.

**We want your views on the level of increase we should apply next year.**

3. We are currently allowed to increase Council Tax by up to 2%, without a local referendum (The Adult Social Care Precept can be added in addition to this 2%). Where we refer to a 2% increase in Council Tax, we are using 2% as a shorthand for an increase of 1.99%

## Council Tax Increase

Every year we have the option to increase Council Tax.

Increasing Council Tax by 2% (65p a week for a band D household) would raise an extra £4.4 million a year for the council to spend on maintaining key services such as children's services, waste and recycling, street lighting, parks, registrars, and addressing homelessness.

The increases would not only contribute additional funds for 2020/21, but would also provide an increase to the council's base funding position going forward.

## Social Care Precept

**In 2018/19 the council spent £234 million on social care services and the council spending annually on social care has increased to 65% of net spending.**

In the most recent 2019/20 review, over 6,000 adults were being supported by adult social care. Of these,

- 65% of service users (almost 4,000 people) are supported to live independently in the community, with over 2,000 people in care homes.
- 52% of eligible adult social care service users (over 3,000 people) receive 'self-directed support' to meet their needs, giving people more choice and control to live their life independently.

In addition, over 2,000 carers are receiving support from adult social care.

Adult social care continues to face increased costs, for example to ensure that staff who provide care receive the national living wage, and because more people are living longer and need our support.

Whilst we recognise the need for wider change at a national level to make the social care system fair and sustainable in the future, tackling our immediate social care challenges will require decisive action and appropriate funding.

In addition to a general Council Tax increase, we'd like to know if you would support paying an extra 2% Adult Social Care Precept if you knew it would generate £4.4 million a year for social care services to look after some of our most vulnerable residents.

This will also help to guard against any loss of short term grants to fund specific services for vulnerable people which Government may decide not to renew.

## Your views on the level of increase in Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept

In the survey questions, question 1 asks you what level of Council Tax increase (no increase, 1% or 2%) you think we should apply to support the delivery of general council services.

Question 2 asks you what level of Adult Social Care Precept you think we should apply (no increase, 1% or 2% **in addition** to the increase in Council Tax in question 1) to support the delivery of adult social care.

This table shows the impact that different options for raising Council Tax / Adult Social Care Precept would have on households. The table shows increases up to 4% (this would be 2% Council Tax plus 2% Adult Social Care Precept).

Council Tax band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total Increase in income for BCC
2019/20 rate	£1127.22	£1315.08	£1502.95	£1690.82	£2066.56	£2442.30	£2818.04	£3381.65	
<b>Annual increase in rate paid in 2020/21</b>									
<b>1%</b>	£11.27	£13.15	£15.03	£16.91	£20.66	£24.42	£28.17	£33.81	<b>£2.2m</b>
<b>2%</b>	£22.54	£26.30	£30.06	£33.82	£41.33	£48.84	£56.35	£67.62	<b>£4.4m</b>
<b>3%</b>	£33.81	£39.45	£45.09	£50.72	£61.99	£73.26	£84.53	£101.44	<b>£6.6m</b>
<b>4%</b>	£45.08	£52.61	£60.12	£67.63	£82.66	£97.69	£112.71	£135.26	<b>£8.8m</b>
<b>Weekly increase in rate paid in 2020/21</b>									
<b>1%</b>	£0.22	£0.25	£0.29	£0.33	£0.40	£0.47	£0.54	£0.65	
<b>2%</b>	£0.43	£0.51	£0.58	£0.65	£0.79	£0.94	£1.08	£1.30	
<b>3%</b>	£0.65	£0.76	£0.87	£0.98	£1.19	£1.41	£1.63	£1.95	
<b>4%</b>	£0.87	£1.01	£1.16	£1.30	£1.59	£1.88	£2.17	£2.60	

Figures exclude amounts you pay for Police and Fire services, which are set by those authorities.

You can read our Equality Impact Relevance Check at [bristol.gov.uk/budget2020-2021](http://bristol.gov.uk/budget2020-2021) which considers the potential effects of the options on citizens with protected characteristics.

### 1. Which of the following Council Tax options would you prefer next year?

- No increase to Council Tax.
- An increase of 1% to Council Tax. This option would raise £2.2 million to support the delivery of services.
- An increase of 2% to Council Tax. This option would raise £4.4 million to support the delivery of services.

### 2. Which of the following Adult Social Care Precept options would you prefer next year?

- No additional Adult Social Care Precept.
- An additional 1% Adult Social Care Precept. This would be an extra 1% increase to Council Tax in addition to the increase in Council Tax you chose in question 1. This option would raise £2.2 million to support the delivery of adult social care.
- An additional 2% Adult Social Care Precept. This would be an extra 2% increase to Council Tax in addition to the increase in Council Tax you chose in question 1. This option would raise £4.4 million to support the delivery of adult social care.

## Long term thinking/future investment

**3. Thinking more widely about funding in the city** (not just services funded by Council Tax), we would like to know what you think is most important to help shape the future of the city. Please select high importance or medium importance or low importance for each service area.

	High importance	Medium importance	Low importance
Adult Social Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's services and social care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Health*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bin/recycling collection and Cleaner Streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture & tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport and leisure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting Bristol's economy and jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tackling homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate Change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean Air	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New roads and road maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cycling and Walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*Public Health is information and services that help people be healthier (mentally and physically) and stay healthy. It is not the same as NHS services

**4. If you would like to tell us why you selected the options you have in the previous three questions, please describe below.**

## About you

We would like to receive feedback from people with as wide a variety of views and needs as possible in Bristol.

It would be very helpful if you could complete the following 'About You' questions. This will help us ensure that no-one is discriminated against unlawfully. All questions are optional. You do not have to answer any of them if you prefer not to.

Information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Personal and sensitive information will be used solely for the purpose of equalities monitoring to ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

Our privacy policy, which explains how we will process your personal information, how long we will retain it and your rights as a data subject, [bristol.citizenspace.com/privacy\\_policy](https://bristol.citizenspace.com/privacy_policy)

### 5. What is your full postcode e.g. BS9 3JZ

If you are responding on behalf of a business or other organisation, please provide the postcode of the organisation's local premises

### 6. What is your age?

- |                                |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-10  | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75-84             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 +              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

### 7. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes  No  Prefer not to say

### 8. What is your sex?

- Female  Prefer not say  
 Male  Other (please describe):

### 9. Have you gone through any part of a gender reassignment process or do you intend to?

- Yes  No  Prefer not to say

### 10. What is your ethnic group? (please tick one box only)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British         | <input type="checkbox"/> Black /African / Caribbean / Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / Multi ethnic group                 | Any other ethnic background (please describe): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Other           | <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy / Roma / Irish Traveller             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian / Asian British |   |  |

### 11. What is your religion/faith?

- |                                      |                                 |  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pagan  | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other religion or belief (please describe): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu       |                                 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish      |                                 |  |

## 12. What is your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
  Heterosexual / Straight
  Other (please describe):
- Gay Man
  Prefer not to say
- Gay Woman / Lesbian

## 13. Are you pregnant or have you given birth in the last 26 weeks?

- Yes
  No
  Prefer not to say

## 14. Are you a refugee or asylum seeker?

- Yes
  No
  Prefer not to say

## 15. Which of the following best describes you (please tick all that apply)

- I am a resident in Bristol
  I am responding on behalf of a public transport provider
- I work in Bristol but live elsewhere
  Bristol City Council employee
- I represent / own a local business
  Other (please specify)
- I am responding on behalf of a housing association
- I am responding on behalf of a Voluntary/Community/Social Enterprise
- I am a Councillor
  If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please say which
- I am an MP
- I am responding on behalf of a health/social care provider

## 16. How did you hear about this consultation?

- Poster
  Citizens' Panel notification
- Postcard/flyer
  Voice and Influence Partnership
- Survey delivered through my door
  Friends of/campaign group
- Email from council
  Through an organisation I belong to
- Letter from council
  Through my trade organisation
- Verbally from a council officer
  Ward councillor
- At an event
  From my MP
- Facebook
  Radio / TV
- Twitter
  Newspaper/online newspaper
- NextDoor
  Library
- Instagram
  Citizen Service Point
- Snapchat
  Word of mouth
- Ask Bristol notification

Other (please specify):

If you heard about it from an organisation, friends of or campaign group, or at an event, please specify:

## 17. We want to make sure our surveys are as good as possible.

Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements:

### There is enough information about the proposals for me to answer the questions

Strongly agree   
  Agree   
  Neither agree nor disagree   
  Disagree   
  Strongly disagree

### The questions make it easy for me to give my views

Strongly agree   
  Agree   
  Neither agree nor disagree   
  Disagree   
  Strongly disagree

### The survey meets my accessibility requirements

Strongly agree   
  Agree   
  Neither agree nor disagree   
  Disagree   
  Strongly disagree

Thanks for taking part in this consultation. Please return this survey to us by **Wednesday 4 December** using the freepost envelope provided.

If you don't have a freepost envelope, please request one from us by emailing [consultation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@bristol.gov.uk) or calling **0117 922 2848**.

Please do not use your own envelope as the freepost service rules have changed.



## What happens next?

The consultation on our 2020/2021 budget is open until **Wednesday 4 December 2019** and you need to complete the survey and submit it before that date to ensure your views are taken into account.

You can request alternative formats of this document by contacting the consultation team on [consultation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@bristol.gov.uk) or by calling **0117 922 2848**.

All responses to the consultation will be analysed and included in a report that will be published on the Bristol City Council website in early 2020.

Your responses will help inform final proposals which will be considered by Full Council at its budget-setting meeting in February 2020.

**Data Protection:** data you supply will be held and used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Personal information you supply is confidential. The council will only publish aggregate or summary results from the consultation, which will not identify individuals. Information will be stored for three years.

# Further information

## What is the budget?

**Bristol City Council spends more than £1 billion a year on running day-to-day services (including schools, social services, care homes, libraries, planning and transport).**

The money we have available for this is called a **revenue budget**. We also spend hundreds of millions of pounds a year investing in the city. This is funded from our **capital budget**.

Each year, the council sets its budget for the coming year (April to March).

The budget defines the council's income and the amount we will spend on day-to-day services and one-off investments over the next twelve months. There is a legal requirement to set a balanced budget which is approved by Bristol's elected councillors. This usually happens in February. The money we use to invest in the city or pay for services comes from a number of different places. The biggest sources of money are government grants, Council Tax, business rates and rent income from council-owned houses.

## Why are costs going up?

**The main reason for rising costs is that more people are using services provided by the council. Even if the number of people using these services stayed the same, the cost of running these services would still be increasing because prices are going up.**

One of the council services that has seen the biggest increases in costs is adult social care.

As people live longer and the number of people needing help with complex illnesses and needs rises, so the cost of providing support increases.

Added to this is the growing price of materials and wage rises which add to the rising cost of the service. When costs go up and the money we receive goes down we're left with a budget gap we need to try and fill.

To help pay for adult social care services to our most vulnerable residents next year, the council could charge up to 2% extra in addition to the Council Tax increase. This is called the Adult Social Care Precept and currently councils have only been authorised to raise this extra 2% in 2020/21 – we don't know if it will be possible in future years.

## Other budgets the council manages

**Further information is provided below about four other budgets the council manages that it must keep separate from its main day-to-day spending.**

These are the:

- **Dedicated Schools Grant**
- **Public health budget**
- **Housing Revenue Account**
- **Capital budget**

Each of these is funded in different ways and the council can only spend the money in those budgets on very specific things.

### The Dedicated Schools Grant

**This budget is used to pay for schools and education services for children and young people in Bristol and can only be used for these things.**

The money to pay for these schools and services comes from the government every year in a grant called the Dedicated Schools Grant (approximately £370 million).

This grant is split into four parts or blocks:

- **Schools Block** – money that is given to primary and secondary schools and academies in the city;
- **Central School Services Block** – funding for the council to carry out essential things it needs to do for all schools and academies in the city;
- **High Needs Block** – dedicated funding for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or for those who need alternative provision (such as a Pupil Referral Unit);
- **Early Years Block** – money to fund free nursery and pre-school hours for three and four year olds and for two year olds from households with low incomes.

This coming year (2020/21) we expect to receive approximately £6.6 million of additional funding for High Needs. However, this is still not sufficient for the overall demands of the High Needs Block.

## The Public Health Budget

**The council receives a yearly grant from the government to promote good mental and physical health in the city and pay for services that help people be healthier and stay healthy.**

This year the council received £31.6 million from the government to pay for public health work which works out as £68 per person in the city. Next year as a result of the Government's recent spending round we expect to receive approximately £32.5 million.

The council has no say in how much money the government gives us to pay for public health work and we are required to spend the money in line with set guidelines known as the 'Public Health Outcomes Framework'.

## The Housing Revenue Account

**The council owns and manages over 27,000 houses and flats from which we collect rent and/or service charges.**

The Housing Revenue Account is mostly made up of the rent we collect. This money is used to plan and provide services for people living in council housing, including repairs and improvements.

The Housing Revenue Account has a programme to build new council homes. This year we can use up to £21.1 million to invest in building houses in Bristol.

We are not consulting on the Housing Revenue Account because it is a ring-fenced budget and we are not proposing any changes to how the money in the HRA is used.

## The Capital Budget

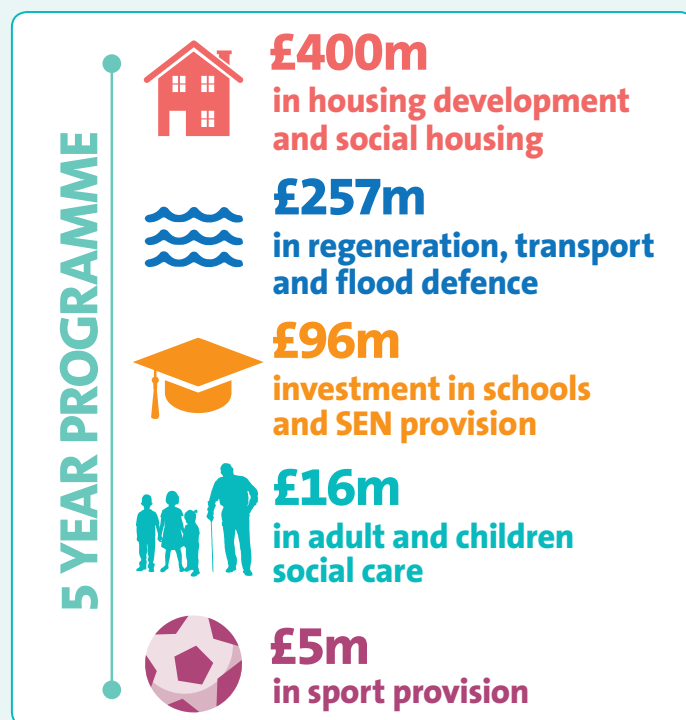
**Besides spending money on running day-to-day services the council also spends hundreds of millions of pounds a year investing in the city.**

Most of this money comes from grants, long term borrowing and money we make from selling things we own.

We have a five year capital investment programme to 2023 of approximately £900 million. This investment will help meet the city's aspirations and sustain economic growth.

The programme includes: investment in independent living schemes for older and vulnerable adults; helping to build more homes including council housing stock and affordable homes; providing enough school places (including schools for children with special needs), and making improvements to our core infrastructure such as roads and footpaths.

You can see our approved capital programme at <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s29827/>



## Reserves

**In addition to the council's budgets to pay for investment and day-to-day services, the council also holds money in reserve - much like many people will have savings.**

The main council reserve is called the General Reserve and is used to cover unanticipated expenditure, reduced income arising in any particular year, and emergency events such as natural disasters and other unforeseen urgent needs. The amount of money put aside is based on the overall size of the council's budget and risk. This is currently £20 million. The council also holds a number of other reserves called 'earmarked reserves'. These are sums of money that have been put aside to deal with specific liabilities.

We think that the current level of reserves is necessary to cover emergency or unanticipated expenditure, and to meet earmarked liabilities, and we are therefore not considering using the reserves to pay for anticipated services or to meet planned budget shortfalls.

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, audio tape, large print, easy English, BSL video or CD rom or plain text please contact us by emailing [consultation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@bristol.gov.uk) or calling **0117 922 2848**.

