

5th September 2017

Hampshire 2017/18 Precepts Report

1. There are 7 District Councils within Hampshire. There are 263 local precepting bodies. Of these, 20 raise a zero precept (2 are parish councils and 18 parish meetings). Non precepting Parishes have not been included within the statistics presented below. The remaining 243 local precepting bodies include parish meetings (4), parish councils (224) and town councils (15).
2. The precept figures for 2017/18 are presented with the figures for 2016/17, where relevant, in brackets.
3. The total precept raised is £20,105,159 (£18,981,894).
4. Of the total precept raised, the twenty largest councils (based on electorate) raised £10,203,760 (£9,752,83).
5. The average Band D tax rate is £49.30 (£46.61).
6. 52 Local precepting bodies kept the precept for 2017/18 the same as 2016/17, which for the most would have meant a reduction in Band D tax rate (e.g. Dummer Parish Council -30.62%). 15 Local precepting bodies reduced their precept. One in particular (Exbury and Lepe Parish Council) reduced their precept by 100% from £2,262 to £0. This Parish Council is unusual in that it is predominately an Estate.
7. Of the 176 local precepting bodies that increased their precept, 58 increased this by less than £1,000.
8. The largest precept increase by percentage was Bramshill Parish Council, which raised its precept by 100% from £1,500 to £3,000 taking its Band D tax rate from £14.22 to £28.43.
9. The highest Band D increase was Droxford Parish Council, which raised its Band D tax rate by £31.37 or 56% from £55.92 to £87.29.
10. The overall profile of Band D Changes was:

Band D Change	No. of Councils	Band D Change	No. of Councils
< 0%	65	3.0 – 3.9%	20
0%	14	4.0 – 9.9%	49
<1%	22	10% - 19.9%	25
1.0 – 1.9%	16	20% - 49.9%	18
2.0 – 2.9%	10	>50%	4

11. Looking at the 116 local precepting bodies that increased their Band D tax rate by more than 3%, the effect in Band D tax rate varied from £0.39 to £31.37.

Band D Tax Rate Increase (£)	No. of Councils
£0.00 - £4.99	77
£5.00 - £9.99	20
£10.00 - £14.99	7
£15.00 - £24.99	10
>£25.00	2

12. Of the 116 local precepting bodies that increased their Band D Tax by more than 3%, there were just 2 where the effect in Band D tax rate was more than £25:

Local Precepting Body	Band D Tax Rate 2017/18 (£)	Band D Tax Rate Increase (£)	Band D Tax Rate Increase (%)
Bentley Parish Council	£107.55	£29.22	37.3%
Droxford Parish Council	£87.29	£31.37	56.1%

For both of these councils the increase was due to proposed improvements to the play park facilities located within their respective recreational grounds. Bentley Parish Council is also giving considerations for a Bailiff Enforcement service and the purchase of defibrillators and Speed Indicative Devices.

13. The below table shows the difference between districts:

District	Total No. of Local Precepting Bodies	Local Precepting Bodies with no precept	Total precept raised (£) 2016/17	Total Precept Raised (£) 2017/18	Average Precept Increase (£)	Average Band D Increase (£)	Average Increase (%)
Basingstoke and Deane	41	9	£1,201,671	£1,252,689	£1,244	£2.56	7.67%
East Hampshire	38	2	£3,193,225	£3,447,891	£6,702	£3.68	7.13%
Eastleigh	10	0	£2,745,925	£2,854,599	£10,867	£2.39	3.01%
Hart	21	0	£2,841,421	£2,969,039	£6,077	£4.12	7%
New Forest	37	0	£5,134,706	£5,469,221	£9,040	£1.44	3.15%
Test Valley	51	7	£1,343,687	£1,403,511	£1,173	£1.79	5.14%
Winchester City Council	45	2	£2,521,258	£2,708,208	£4,154	£3.41	6%

To introduce precept referendums based solely on a percentage increase to Band D rates (as is the case with principle councils) would be an unreasonable extravagance. For example, Wootton St. Lawrence Parish Council raised their precept by £1,100.00 from £3550.00 to £4,650.00, incurring electors a £3.75 increase to their Band D Tax rate, a 31.21% raise.

Hannington Parish Council increased its precept to £6,703 from £5,397, an increase of £1,306.00, taking the Band D tax rate from £29.02 to £34.03, a 17.26% increase.

If a referendum was required for increases in Band D tax rates of 3% or £25.00, whichever is greater, smaller councils would suffer greatly. For example, Charlton Parish Council increased their precept from £14,500 to £18,850, an increase of £4,350 (Band D Rate increase £5.64 / 30.83%), which would result in a Band D Tax rate of £23.95. This is still well below the county average of £49.30. Basing referendum costs to be roughly £2.50 per electorate, Charlton's 1572 electors would incur a total referendum cost in excess of £3,930. This therefore leaves Charlton with only £420 of their £4350 increase remaining!

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