

Summary of Council budget proposals (suggestions) for 2024-25

Every year the Council must tell everyone how they plan to spend their money and pay for the services that they provide.

This year the Council will have to make some very difficult decisions.

The Council no longer gets enough money to keep running the services that it needs to. Last year, the Council spent nearly all of the money it has on services for children who need extra help and on services for older people.

The Council had to use its savings to pay for other services, and this money has now run out. The Council has no choice- it has to spend less money next year. This means residents will get less and will have to pay more.

No one at the council, or anyone who lives or works in Bradford, wants this to happen, but there is not enough money to keep all the services the same.

As well as saving money, the Council is looking for ways to think about what services are offered and to find new ways to do this. An example of this is offering more to residents on the website and through webchat and apps.

Bradford Council is not the only council who is making these decisions- many councils are in a very similar position. Bradford Council is speaking with the government to ask for help.

For this year, the suggestions to spend less money on services are in the Budget Papers. This document gives some of the main suggestions that have been made. The decision about whether to do these things will be made by the Council in February.

Until the 17 of February, residents can have their say about what they think of the suggestions. There is an online form and there will be meetings with groups who have areas of interest.

Council Tax

Council tax is the money that every household in Bradford must pay. It pays for things like care for older people, collecting the bins and street lighting,

This year the suggestion is to charge 4.99% more than people paid last year. This includes a 2.99 %t rise in the basic council tax and a 2 % rise in what is called the "Social Care Precept" which all goes in services for older and disabled residents.

This rise will mean that the council has an additional £11.6 million to spend on services to help provide what is needed. If it is agreed, it would add £80.89 a year or £1.56 a week to bills for residents in Band D properties.

Adult Social Care

Adult social care support older residents who need care in their homes and help if they have to go into a care home. It also provides services for disabled adults.

The suggestion in this service is to save £5 million. The plans for this include giving more advice to older people to help them to stay in their own homes longer, and to stay well and active. The plan is to offer more services to help disabled people who

want to go to work and stay independent. It is also to use technology better to help to deliver services.

Children's Services

Bradford has two outdoor education centres in North Yorkshire where schools and other groups pay to take children for activity holidays. These are expensive to run, so the suggestion is that one of these, called Ingleborough Hall, is sold. This would save £200,000.

Department of Place

This department runs lots of services that lots of residents use. They look after streets and parking, parks, leisure centres, tips, and they provide community support.

Bradford has more tips than most councils, and there is a suggestion that three of these are closed. These are the tip sites in Keighley at Sugden End at Queensbury and in Ilkley. All tips would be shut on Mondays to save money. For residents who ask for big items (bulk waste) to be collected from their homes, the suggestion is that the cost of this will go up. There is also a suggestion that the cost of the garden waste bins for residents who choose to have them goes up. These changes would make more than £1 million in savings.

There is a suggestion to move the Visitor Information Centre in Bradford into the Library and to reduce the money that the council gives to groups who put on culture events. This would save nearly £200,000.

The suggestions also include a review of leisure centres and libraries to find out how to save money. The plan is also to charge more for people for swimming and sports centres. When people use the museums in Bradford, the suggestion is that if they are able to pay, they make a donation.

Another suggestion is that people will pay more for car parks in the district. For residents who already have a permit to park outside of their houses, the suggestion is that they start to pay towards this - it is free at the moment.

The Council pays money to an organisation to help support the voluntary sector. The suggestion is that the council can no longer afford to do this, and it stops. There is also a suggestion that the team who work with and help communities to connect is made smaller and their work is done by other staff in the council.

Corporate Resources

The Corporate Resources department runs all of the support services that are needed for the council to run. This includes IT, looking after buildings, managing the money and things like allotments. The suggestion is that this department saves money by making changes to what food the council provides and in the costs for cleaning buildings. Residents who want to have an allotment will be charged the full amount for this, so the price of allotments would go up.

Human Resources (HR)

The HR team, who look after employees, plan to make changes to what training staff are offered, make more money from selling services, and start to charge people from outside Bradford for some services. This will save £185,000.

Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services

The Council Tax teams are suggesting that people who have more than one house will pay the full amount of council tax for both houses.

When businesses do not pay their tax, the council takes them to court to get the money back. The suggestion is that these businesses are charged more to go to court.

There is also a suggestion to reduce what the council is able to give to help residents on benefits with buying household goods and gas and electricity top ups.

Office of the Chief Executive

This department plans to spend less on printing things and make more use of social media. This department is also working to get more money into the council from grants and other places.