



Council Tax 2024/25

Facts and Figures on Finance



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

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Facts and figures on finance

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Foreword

Welcome from the Leader of the Council

The 2024/2025 budget is the second I have presented as Leader of the Council and my plan continues to make sure we develop our vision, ambitions and priorities and deliver a better and brighter future for Trafford. I know nobody likes receiving their Council Tax bill, especially in the current economic climate; however, I wanted to highlight to you the increasing importance of Council Tax in funding local services.

Financial Pressures

In a normal period, the financial strain caused by inflationary costs on budgets covering pay and contracts, the cost of the National Living Wage and increasing demand for social care services outstrip any funding increases available to the Council each year. In 2024/25 we needed to address a budget gap of £17.80m, which is on top of £182.9m of savings and efficiencies delivered since 2010. This has been no mean task for an authority like Trafford who already provide value for money services and are one of the lowest spending authorities in the country and with a council tax level in 2023/24 some £209 per property lower than the average for our neighbouring districts.

Despite some very welcome grants over the last two financial years 2023 and 2024, to cover the extraordinary pressures being faced in our social care sector, the government has set out an expectation that councils will raise Council Tax and the adult social care precept by the maximum amount available to cover the growing cost pressures. We are faced with a difficult choice to increase Council Tax by 2.99% and use the 2% adult social care precept increase to help towards the rising cost of caring for older people and some of the most vulnerable in Trafford Council.

As a Council we continue to deliver innovative solutions to generate alternative funding and income streams rather than to make cuts to vital local services. The Council's Asset Investment Strategy is continuing to support the achievement of a balanced budget and is providing invaluable revenue streams to support the budget. Some of the acquisitions involve some key regeneration sites in the Borough, such as Stretford Mall and Stamford Quarter in Altrincham, and will provide a real opportunity to develop them into assets we can be proud of in the future.

Whilst the economic forecasts remain uncertain, we must continue to look to the future. In this regard, the Council, remains confident that we can improve services, facilities and the environment. Our Corporate Plan and budget proposals contain commitments to tackle health inequality, support people out of poverty and push forward with our ambitious climate change initiatives through the net zero action plan.

Additional Investment

Despite the budget challenge there are some key areas of investment within our 2024/2025 budget including £5.4m net investment in our social care services; safeguarding vulnerable children, young people and adults and supporting a sustainable care market.

In addition, as part of our plan to be a carbon neutral borough by 2038, we have a carbon neutral action plan which is delivering some notable successes including a range of energy efficiency measures across our council buildings, leisure estate and street lighting infrastructure.

We are also investing in services which affect the look and feel of the borough, as we know how important the environment is for our residents. These include additional capital investment of £75m in 2024/25, including £6.0m in our highways, a continuation of plans to modernise our leisure centres with the ongoing refurbishment of Altrincham and the redevelopment at Partington, improving schools and provision of additional places at £16m, £12m on active travel projects across the borough, continuation of the town centre regeneration schemes at Stretford and Altrincham and investment in our parks and green spaces £2.8m

Future Outlook

Each and every year the costs of the services we deliver are growing at a significantly faster rate than our income, which is compounded by the relative low level of funding, including council tax, the Council receives, making managing the council's budget in the years ahead extremely difficult.

The financial sustainability of local government has never been more challenging with an increasing number of high-profile local authorities formally declaring notices that they cannot set a balanced budget, the financial landscape suggests there will be significantly more over the next twelve months. The forthcoming year, 2024/25, will be the fifth year where local authorities will only receive a single year finance settlement. The Council's funding beyond 2024/25 will be determined by the outcome of the review of Relative Needs and Resources and the reforms to the Business Rates Retention System under the Levelling Up agenda. Currently there is no indication of future funding levels, and the Council is only able to financially plan with difficulty beyond 2024/25, with our medium-term budget plans showing a gap of nearly £30.0m for the two financial years 2025 to 2027.

As Leader of the Council, I will continue to lobby Government to ensure that sufficient resource is provided to meet the increasing demands we are facing, and that we continue with our Transformation and Change Programme to ensure we strive to improve service performance and ensure every service area is making best use of taxpayers' money.

We will face difficult choices, and we must decide how we best cut our cloth in these trying times. But, as ever, our commitment to maintaining Trafford as a place where residents, communities and business prosper, remains our overriding vision.

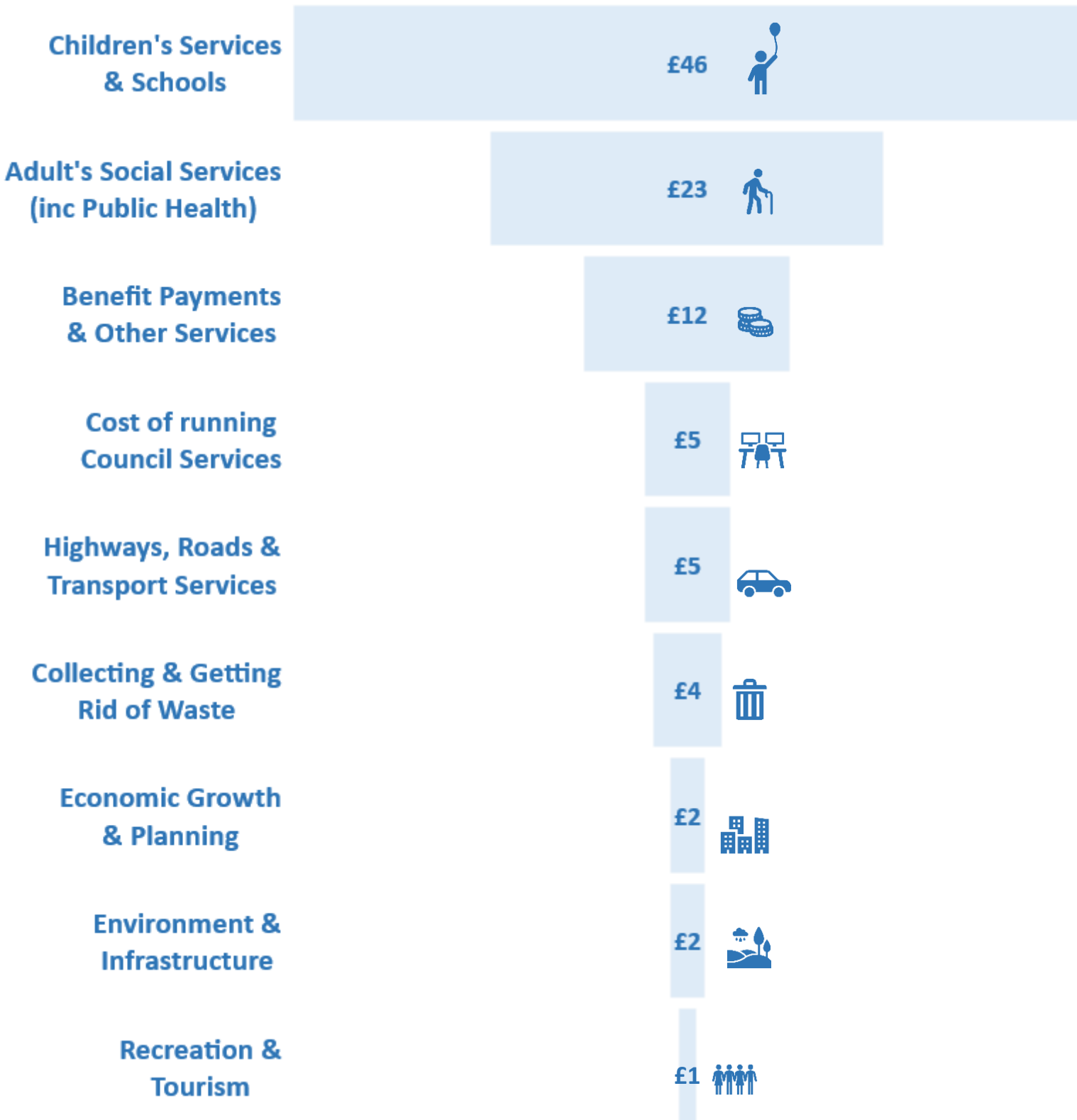
Thanks for taking the time to read this leaflet and we look forward to 2024/2025.

Councillor Tom Ross

Leader of Trafford Council

1. Council Tax helps pay for the following

£100 a month of Council expenditure looks like:





2,747 children in receipt of children's safeguarding services
469 periods of children being in the care of the local authority
409 Child Protection plans



Supports 4,963 residents with a care package
Provides 7,700 services to service users
Provides 957,072 hours of external home care support
Supports 1,570 residents through Stabilise and Make Safe (reablement)
Supports 444 residents through Discharge to Assess (preventing Delayed Transfers from Acute Beds)



Maintains over 830km of roads, 1,190km of footpaths and cycle lanes and over 61,000 drainage gullies
Responsible for 22,000 highway trees and 60,000 trees within public parks and open spaces
Collects approximately 86,000 tonnes of waste from more than 100,000 households, undertaking over 10 million collections every year
Manages parking restrictions on street and off street across the borough
Over 200 residents supported with free Data SIM cards through the National Databank initiative
A laptop loan scheme which has seen almost 647 laptops provided to residents who don't have access to their own equipment



Provides housing advice and assistance to over 81,000 households
Prevents over 347 households from becoming homeless
Assists over 330 households to find and secure affordable housing through the Council's Housing Register
Enables the development of 245 new affordable homes across the borough



The Council's customer contact service receives approximately 170,000 telephone enquiries a year. In 2023/24, the Contact Centre target is to answer 70 per cent of telephone calls within 30 seconds

Trafford Libraries welcomed over 495,500 visitors across the borough in 2022/23

Waterside, Trafford's award-winning destination for performance, culture and events, welcomed over 87,000 visitors in 2022/23

The authority has one crematorium and five cemeteries, and the service undertakes approximately 1,600 cremations and 600 burials per year

The number of full-time equivalent staff working for us in February 2024 was 3,947.

**We cover all these services in our
spending plans**

2. Our spending plans

	2023/24			2024/25		
	Gross spending £m	(Income) £m	Net spending £m	Gross spending £m	(Income) £m	Net spending £m
Children's Services and Schools	242.3	(191.9)	50.4	281.3	(224)	57.3
Adults and Wellbeing (incl. Public Health)	130.5	(56.7)	73.8	140.3	(67.3)	73.0
Highways, Roads and Transport Services	29.0	(3.9)	25.1	28.4	(4.0)	24.4
Economic Growth and Planning	20.1	(22.9)	(2.8)	12.3	(14.7)	(2.4)
Environment and Infrastructure	9.2	(1.6)	7.6	9.4	(1.6)	7.8
Collecting and Getting Rid of Waste	22.2	(0.3)	21.9	21.6	(0.2)	21.4
Recreation and Tourism	8.7	(3.3)	5.4	8.9	(3.3)	5.6
Corporate Support Costs/Other	28.1	(8.1)	20.0	31.0	(8.9)	22.1
Benefit Payments and Other Services	66.9	(58.9)	8.0	76	(67.2)	8.8
Net spending	557.0	(347.6)	209.4	609.2	(391.2)	218.0

Our total planned spending on services is £609.2m. This is paid for from specific grants, local fees and charges of £391.2m. The largest grants are Dedicated Schools Grant £197.0m, and Housing Benefit subsidy grant £47.5m. The remaining £218.0m comes from retained business rates of £84.3m and Council Tax of £127.9m, including £2.4m Adult Social Care Precept and £5.58m use of reserves.

Why spending has changed

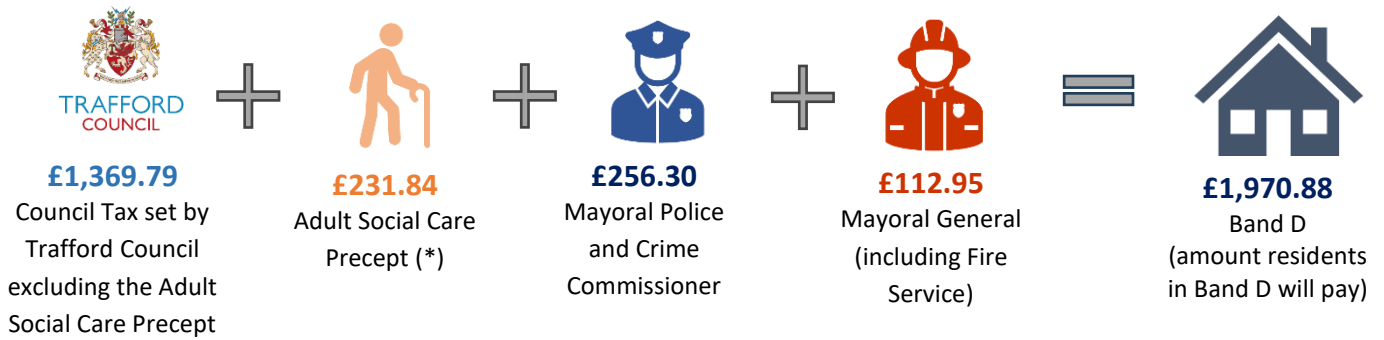
We estimate that our spending before the use of reserves will increase from £209.8 million in 2023/24 to £218.0 million in 2024/25 – an increase of £8.2 million:

	£million
Demographic pressures and investment in social care	12.9
Increase in levy charges (incl. Waste Disposal and Transport Levy)	0.4
Inflation and other increases	3.6
Increase due to Living Wage	4.9
Increase in Government Grants	(8.3)
Income Generation and Service Delivery Savings	(6.2)
Reduction in Investment Income and additional borrowing	0.7
Other	0.2
Total	8.2

3. How we work out your Council Tax

Council Tax pays for our spending plans that are not covered by government grants, and fees and charges. We also add on the net spending plans of the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner and the Mayoral General (including Fire Services) before we work out how much Council Tax each household must pay.

Trafford agreed to raise the total level of Council Tax in 2024/25 by 4.99% at the Council meeting on 21 February 2024, made up of 2.99% general increase and 2.0% for the 'Adult Social Care' precept.



(*)Trafford Council provides adult social care services and has therefore been given the option from the Secretary of State of adding an Adult Social Care Precept of 2% onto Council Tax Bills. As a result of an aging population and inflation the cost of adult social care services are increasing, and it is important we continue to meet the cost of the service which supports our elderly and vulnerable residents.

	2024/25 £million
Our spending plans	217.990
Council Tax collection fund	(1.118)
-surplus/+deficit previous year	
Contribution from Business rates	(84.183)
Contribution from Reserves	(5.580)
Council Tax Requirement Trafford's own purposes	127.109
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner	20.340
Mayoral General (including Fire Services)	8.964
Total Council Tax Requirement	156.413

The amount charged depends on the Government's banding of your property which is determined by the property's value. We work out the Council Tax for each property band as a specific proportion of the Band D tax.

The estimated equivalent number of properties in valuation Band D is 79,362, so the Council Tax for a property in Band D is £1,970.88. The relevant tax levels for 2024/25 are as follows:

Band	Fraction	Council Tax £
A	6/9	1,313.90
B	7/9	1,532.90
C	8/9	1,751.87
D	9/9	1,970.88
E	11/9	2,408.84
F	13/9	2,846.82
G	15/9	3,284.78
H	18/9	3,941.76



Taxpayers in the following Parish areas will pay extra because of the addition of a local parish precept:

Band	Partington £	Warburton £	Carrington £
A	1,357.27	1,347.23	1,333.90
B	1,583.49	1,571.79	1,556.23
C	1,809.69	1,796.31	1,778.54
D	2,035.93	2,020.88	2,000.88
E	2,488.35	2,469.95	2,445.51
F	2,940.78	2,919.04	2,890.15
G	3,393.20	3,368.11	3,334.78
H	4,071.86	4,041.76	4,001.76



4. Charges for other public services

Our net spending plans include charges for public services the Council does not directly provide but collects the levies on behalf of other organisations who provide the required services in Trafford, including waste, transport and flood and water management.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Environment Agency (Levies) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 6,500 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river system and existing flood defences together with the operation of a flood warning system and management of the risk of coastal erosion.

The financial details are:

	2023/24 £million	2024/25 £million
Gross expenditure	£104.636	£131.143
Levies raised	£4.412	£4.544
Total Council Tax Base	2,248	2,278

The Local Levy is shared on the basis of Band D Equivalents between all contributing bodies within the Committee Area. The levy to be paid by Trafford Council to the Agency in 2024/25 is £0.158m (£0.154m in 2023/24).

A change in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflects the programme of works for both capital and revenue needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. The total Local Levy raised has increased by 3.0 per cent from £4.412 million in 2023/24 to £4.544 million for 2024/25.

Waste and transport

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority also charge us for services they provide:

	2023/24 £ million	2024/25 £ million
GM Combined Authority (Transport)	16.697	16.732
GM Combined Authority (Waste)	15.748	16.104
Total	32.445	32.836

5. Capital spending and loan debt

We have a capital programme reflecting the investment we are planning to make in our assets (buildings, highways and so on) to support the achievement of the Council's objectives and key priorities. The money to pay for this spending comes from loans, capital grants and contributions and money we make from selling assets. In 2024/25, we plan to spend £152.20 million.

	£million
Schools	15.54
Children's and Adults Social Care	4.64
Highways & Transport	23.69
Leisure Facilities Development	18.60
Regeneration and Economic Development	80.12
Other services	9.61
Total	152.20

As of 31 December 2023, the Council's external debt was £303.0 million which amounts to £1,282 for each person in the borough.