



COUNCIL TAX

2010 - 2011

How much you pay...
Where your money goes...


Sunderland
City Council

Need a hand paying your rent or Council Tax?

One free phone call is all it takes to find out if you can save money on your rent or Council Tax.

Make sure you get what's yours...

Call free on **0800 633 5853**, pop into a Sunderland Customer Service Centre or email enquiries@sunderland.gov.uk

YOUR COUNCIL TAX BILL...

The current difficult economic climate impacts upon us all and the likely spending cuts that the government will make will no doubt affect local authorities throughout the country.

Sunderland City Council is not only extremely effective at budgetary planning and control, but has always been focussed upon delivering the best services for the least cost. We are continually innovating and finding new and efficient ways of providing the services that the people of Sunderland need, want and benefit from.

In 2010-2011 we plan to spend over XXX million to provide services for the XXXXXX residents of Sunderland.

Council Tax is just 13% of the council's budget. It helps to pay for around 800 different services - overleaf you can see what you will be getting for your money.

This year we have ensured that the increase in Council Tax is as low as possible without impacting on services. In fact it is the lowest percentage increase, at xxx, in over ten years – and once again indications are that we will continue to have the lowest Council Tax in the region. We managed to do this by making efficiency savings of around £xx million.

This means you continue to get top quality services at what we believe is very good value for money.

Alongside your day-to-day services, we have also had some major achievements for the city. Amongst others:

- We opened Hetton and Silksworth Pools
- We generated 1,500 jobs with £140m investment secured
- We opened Beckwith Mews, Grindon Mews and Woodridge Gardens Extra Care Schemes
- We opened Castle View and Red House Academies, Washington School opened and St Roberts refurbishment commenced
- We secured £1m Seachange funding for Marine Walk
- We opened the 10th Customer Service Centre and the redeveloped library and Customer Service Centre in Washington

We hope you'll agree that you get a lot for your money in Sunderland.



Paul Watson

Cllr Paul Watson
Leader of the Council



D. Smith

Dave Smith
Chief Executive

Delivering services for a better future


Sunderland
City Council

YOUR COUNCIL TAX HELPS

Based on an average Band A Council Tax bill of approximately 64% of homes are in Band A in Sunderland

Children's Services

Providing services which help keep children safe and healthy and services for children, young people and families through schools, Children's Centres and youth projects.



Customer Services

Making sure all council customers receive an effective, efficient and fair service.



Recreation and tourism

Running sport and leisure centres, museums, libraries, theatres and other visitor attractions and events.



Refuse collection, disposal and environmental health

Collecting and recycling your rubbish, street cleaning, parks and open spaces and everything else that keeps the city clean and green.



Adult Services

Looking after vulnerable people who need care and support to live independent, healthy and active lives.



Environment

Maintaining, protecting and improving the city's natural and built environment.



PAY FOR ALL OF THIS...

£XX per week –

Sunderland City Council

ITEM	APPROX. NET COST PER WEEK AT BAND A
ADULT SERVICES	£
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£
RECREATION AND TOURISM	£
ENVIRONMENT	£
REFUSE COLLECTION, DISPOSAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	£
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	£
GENERAL FUND HOUSING SERVICES	£
CONTINGENCIES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	£
CUSTOMER SERVICES	£
LEVIES	£
TOTAL COUNCIL SERVICES	£
NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY PRECEPT	£
TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY PRECEPT	£
TOTAL BAND A CHARGE	£

THANK YOU

TCA#



Planning and economic development

The Economic Masterplan will set out a plan for how Sunderland will earn its living over the next 15 years, and what this will look like on the ground.



Levies

We pay a direct levy to the Passenger Transport Authority to support public transport and to the Environment Agency to support flood defence works.



Housing services

Making sure everyone has the chance of a decent home and help, where needed, with Housing Benefit.



Contingencies and strategic priorities

Whilst all known expenditure pressures have been provided for within the budget, there is still uncertainty over some costs and it is important that we have sufficient contingencies to meet emergency funding requirements.

Precepts

We collect your contribution towards our police and fire and rescue services which is set by them.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION...

Legislation requires that certain financial information must be included with the Council Tax bill for the City Council, the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Northumbria Police Authority in a prescribed format and this is set out on pages 12 to 14 of this booklet.

Other financial information has been included to show next year's spending on council services and the income received.

In relation to Sunderland's Council Tax information is included on how it compares to other councils, and the main factors, such as the views of residents and some of the major spending issues, which have been considered in setting the budget for the council for 2010-2011. Information is also included on efficiencies achieved to date and forecast to be achieved in the future.

The council's accounts are subject to detailed scrutiny and audit by independent external auditors. In addition, the auditors also assess how well the council uses its resources and achieves value for money. The council's accounts continue to receive an unqualified opinion by the external auditor.

Your Council Tax bill, included with this booklet, shows the amount you are required to pay for council services, and also includes the amounts to help fund both the Fire and Rescue and Police services.

There are various ways to pay Council Tax and these are explained in full on the back of the bill along with information on how you may be entitled to claim Council Tax Benefit, and thereby reduce the amount payable. The free phone number for all benefit enquiries is 0800 633 5853.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Beardmore', written over a horizontal line.

Keith Beardmore
Director of Financial Resources

**Find out if you can save
money on your Council Tax...**

Call free on 0800 633 5853

WHAT YOU PAY

Normally the person living in the property will be responsible for paying Council Tax if it is their main home and they are over 18 years of age.

The amount of Council Tax that you pay depends on the value of your home. More valuable properties pay more Council Tax.

Each home is placed in a valuation band based on what your home was valued at, or would have been valued at, in 1991.

The table below sets out the Council Tax levels for 2010-2011 for Sunderland for each valuation band. Your Council Tax bill states the band that applies to your property.

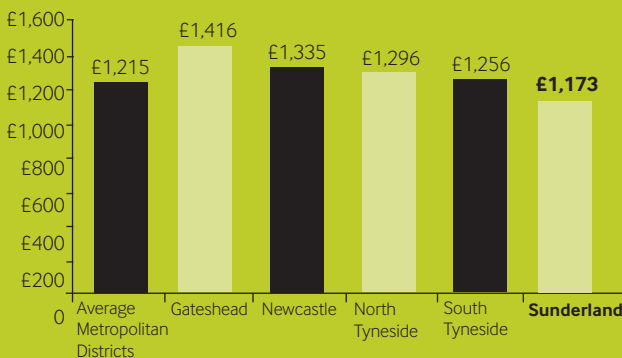
Valuation Band	City Council Tax level	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority Tax level	Northumbria Police Tax level	Total Council Tax level
	£ P	£ P	£ P	£ P
A				
B				
C				
D				
E				
F				
G				
H				

HOW DOES SUNDERLAND'S COUNCIL TAX COMPARE?

In recent years, Sunderland has consistently had the lowest Council Tax in the Tyne and Wear area and in the last 3 years, the lowest in the North East region. This compares

favourably with the average for Metropolitan District Councils throughout the country and reflects the prudent approach the council has taken in setting the Council Tax each year.

Band D Council Tax levels for 2009-2010 for the City Council (excluding Fire and Police)

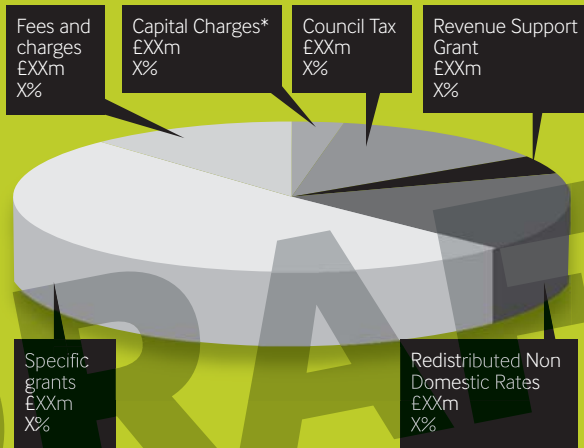


Indications are that for 2010-2011 the amount you pay in Council Tax will again be the lowest in the North East region.

WHERE THE MONEY WILL COME FROM IN 2010-2011

The council provides a wide range of services including schools, caring for the elderly, collecting rubbish and providing leisure facilities. The cost of running and maintaining the day-to-day services provided by the council is called Revenue Expenditure.

The Council Tax you pay forms only part of the funding to pay for these services. The chart below shows the various sources of funding.



Total Income
€XXm

* Capital charges amounting to €XXm are included in gross expenditure and income in accordance with the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice.

Sunderland City Council is the highest rated council in Tyne and Wear.

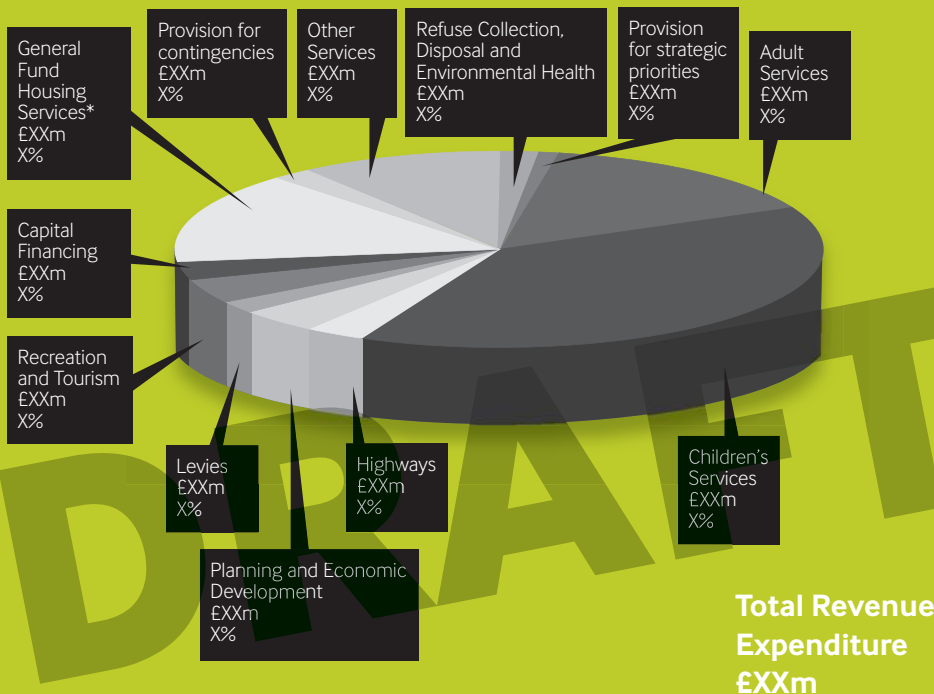
HOW RESIDENTS HELP SET THE BUDGET

We consult with thousands of residents all year round on a whole range of issues that help us plan our services and the development of the city. It's only by residents telling us what they want that we can set the priorities and make sure we're

delivering the things that really matter to people. At budget time we have additional consultation sessions and we're particularly grateful for the help and support of residents who are members of our citizens' panel, "Community Spirit".

WHERE THE MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON SERVICES FOR 2010-2011

The chart below shows what the council plans to spend on its services in 2010-2011.



*This excludes council housing costs as this service has transferred to Gentoo (formerly Sunderland Housing Group). The amount detailed consists of Housing Benefit payments and the cost of the council's strategic housing role.

THE MAJOR ISSUES IN SETTING THE 2010-2011 BUDGET

The budget for next year takes account of a range of increased costs including pay awards, more sustainable waste management, energy prices and increased contract prices.

During the budget process, the council has used balances of £XXm together with efficiency savings of £XXm in order to enable spending pressures to be addressed and to allow for some additional investment in high priority services whilst limiting the increase in Council Tax.

The cost of services

In addition to services provided by the council, other bodies including the Northumbria Police Authority and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority also provide services which the council must collect on their behalf. The table below gives a summary of the net cost of these services for 2010-2011 and how the Council Tax for Band D is built up.

Last Year 2008-2009 £m	Summary net cost of services	This Year 2009-2010 £m	Band D Council Tax £ p

In addition Hetton Town Council is levying a precept of £XX in 2010-2011 (£XX 2008-2009). This is equivalent to a Band D charge of £XX but is only paid by the residents of the Parish of Hetton Town Council.

Cost per head of population

The table below shows the total cost to each person in Sunderland of services provided by the

council and Precepting Authorities after taking account of the income received from Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates.

	Total Budget Requirement £	Revenue Support Grant £	Business Rates £	Collection Fund Surplus £	Net Budget Requirement £
City Council					
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority					
Northumbria Police Authority					
Total					

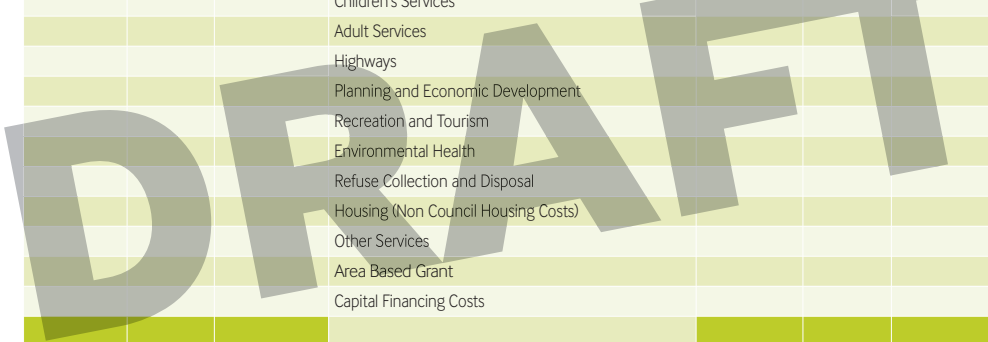
BUDGET INFORMATION

Sunderland City Council budget information

Explanatory Notes

The Net Budget requirement is £XXm with planned gross expenditure of £XXm (£XXm including levies) and gross income of £XXm. The net increase in the total budget requirement is £XXm, details of which are shown in the table opposite.

Borrowing liabilities outstanding at 31 March 2008 were £XXm (of which £XXm was on behalf of other public bodies such as the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority).



Last Year 2009-2010				This Year 2010-2011		
Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m
			Children's Services			
			Adult Services			
			Highways			
			Planning and Economic Development			
			Recreation and Tourism			
			Environmental Health			
			Refuse Collection and Disposal			
			Housing (Non Council Housing Costs)			
			Other Services			
			Area Based Grant			
			Capital Financing Costs			
			Provision for contingencies			
			Provision for strategic priorities			
			Interest on Balances			
			Transfer to/(from) Reserves and Balances			
			Capital Charges			
		TOTAL	EXPENDITURE			
			Levies			
			Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority			
			Environment Agency - Flood Defence			
			TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT			
			Less Revenue Support Grant			
			Redistributed Non Domestic Rates			
			Collection Fund Surplus			
			NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT			

Total number of employees

BUDGET INFORMATION

Levies and precepts

Your Council Tax bill is made up of a number of elements besides the council's budget requirement. These include levies and precepts that the council is legally required to collect on behalf of other organisations.

Levying Authorities

Environment Agency							Change in levy (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to: £m
Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in inflation and levels of service Use of reserves	
Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Flood Defence							xx
Transfer to / (from) reserves							xx
Levy							xx
Sunderland's proportion of the Environment Agency levy is £0.182m in 2009-2010 (2008-2009 £0.151m)							

Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority							Change in the Total Budget Requirement between years is attributable to: £m
Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Inflation and other cost pressures Increase in grant to Nexus Decrease in Income Contribution to reserves	
Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Tyne Tunnels							xx
PTA							xx
Grant to Nexus							xx
Transfer to Reserves							(xx)
Total Budget Requirement							xx
Less Rail Grants and Miscellaneous Grants							Sunderland's proportion of the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority levy is £XXm in 2009-2010 (2008-2009 £XXm)
PTA Levy							

BUDGET INFORMATION

Precepting Authorities

Northumbria Police Authority

	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in Precept (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to:	£m
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Police General							Inflation and other changes	xx
Contingencies							Variation in quantity / quality of service	xx
Total Budget Requirement							Change in other income	(xx)
Less:								
Police Grant								xx
Use of Balances								
Total Net Police Expenditure							Sunderland's proportion of the Northumbria Police Authority precept is £XXm in 2009-2010 (2008-2009 £XXm)	
Less Revenue Support Grant							This represents £XX of the Band D council tax and equates to a XX% increase over last year.	
Business Rates								
Collection Fund Surplus								
Precept								

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in Precept (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to:	£m
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Cost £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Fire Service							Inflation and other changes	xx
Emergency Planning							Reduction in pension costs	(xx)
							Change in other income	(xx)
Contingencies								xx
Use of Balances								
Total Budget Requirement							Sunderland's proportion of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority precept is £XXm in 2009-2010 (2008-2009 £XXm)	
Less Revenue Support Grant							This represents £XX of the Band D council tax and equates to a XX% increase over last year.	
Business Rates								
Collection Fund Surplus								
Net Budget Requirement								

BECOMING MORE EFFICIENT

All councils are required to measure and report the value of efficiency savings they have achieved since April 2008. For the 2010-2011 Budget, Sunderland City Council has continued to work hard to identify and deliver projects which both improve the services the council provides while achieving efficiencies. Services have been reviewed and modernised and there are a range of service improvement and council wide projects in place that will generate savings in 2010-2011 and beyond. An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity falls, but its effectiveness is not reduced.

The table below shows the value of efficiency savings achieved by the end of March 2009 and forecast to be achieved by the end of March 2010:

	By March 2010	By March 2009
Sunderland City Council	£13,196,000	£21,171,000
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority		
Northumbria Police Authority	£1,277,000	£2,619,000
	£10,548,000	£20,248,000

The table below shows the value of gains forecast to be achieved by March 2010 for the average Band D dwelling and compares that with the average figure for similar authorities across England:

	Savings per dwelling	National average for similar authorities
	Band D	Band D
Sunderland City Council	£264.34	£227.00
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority		
Northumbria Police Authority	£8.10	£4.49
	£43.72	£53.79

Each year, councils are assessed by the Audit Commission on their use of resources and given a score out of 4 (4 being "performing strongly" and 1 being "inadequate performance"), 2009 represented the first year that performance was assessed under the new much tougher Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime. Sunderland City Council achieved a score of 3, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and Northumbria Police Authority also scored a 3. These scores recognise strong performance in making efficiency savings and improving services.

This year we have ensured that the increase in Council Tax is as low as possible without impacting on services.

We would love to hear your views on the Council Tax summary. Please fill in the form below below and send it back to the address overleaf.

Tell us what you think:

The length of the summary is:

The information provided in the summary is:

The financial information provided in the summary is:

I would like to see in the next Council Tax summary:

Any other comments:

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Sunderland City Council

FREEPOST XXX XXX

Sunderland SR2 7DN

