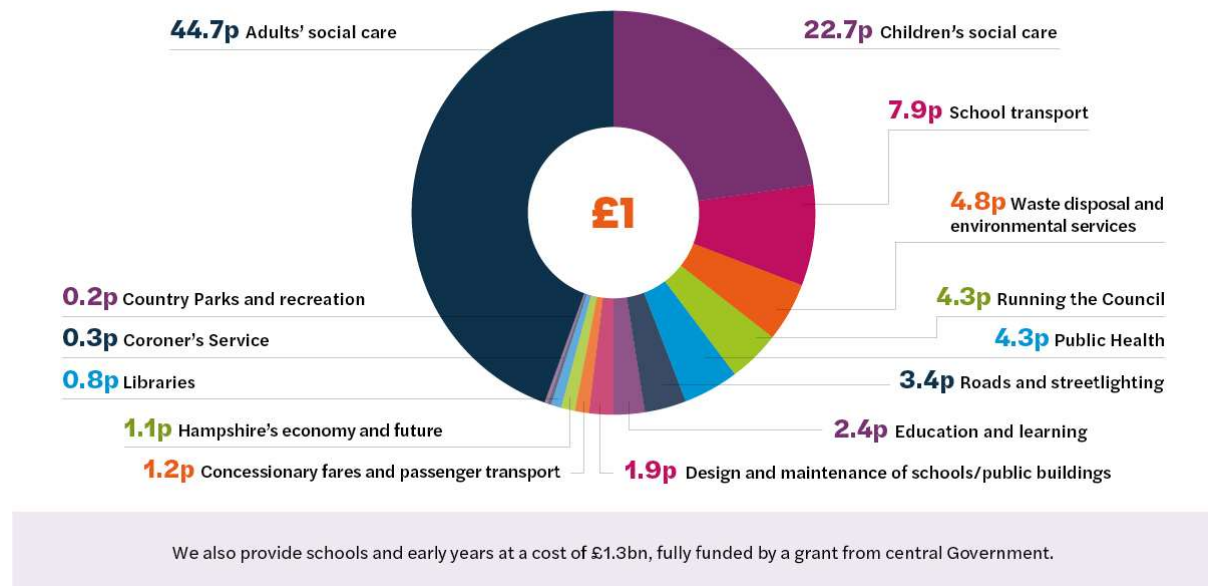


## Hampshire County Councillor Update March 2025

### 1. Hampshire County Council's Budget

This graphic below shows you how each £1 of your Council Tax will be spent next financial year in Hampshire. When you include schools spending then social care, school transport and education make up almost 87% of our budget.



At the budget setting meeting last month HCC agreed the budget for the year ahead which sees an increase of 4.99% in Council Tax. HCC had asked the government to increase it by a larger amount and they refused the request.

Why did HCC ask for a larger rise?

- The County Council's services are underfunded, and the reason for that in large part is HCC's historically low Council Tax rate, which is why HCC requested an above 5% increase from Government.
- Hampshire's Council Tax this financial year is £1533.24 for a band D property - the second lowest in the country. In Surrey the equivalent rate is £1,758.60, West Sussex £1,714.95, and Oxfordshire £1,820.56 for example.
- Each 1% of Council Tax increase in Hampshire nets an additional £8million in revenue for the Council. So, a 5% increase results in £40 million in additional revenue this year.
- Offset that against the ever rising cost of social care. Every month in Hampshire HCC see a net increase of 30 people living in care homes who become reliant upon the County Council to pay their costs - even at the most basic level of care these 360 people add a further £18.7 million of cost to the budget each year.
- Every month HCC are seeing an additional 200 applications for Education Health and Care Plans - the first step for children to register for SEN support. That exponential rise is the reason its budget for Home to School transport (for which SEN children qualify for free) has increased from £24 million per year at the end of the pandemic to £105 million next year.

- Add to this the effect of employers National Insurance, which will cost HCC £10.5 million this year - HCC will get a one off reimbursement of £8 million from Government with nothing for future years.
- Inflation and pay rises add further to the bill. HCC have cut over £700million from its budgets in the last 10 years, and will continue to look for further savings, but reserves will, by 2026/27, be exhausted.
- The County Council does not want to raise council tax above the 5% limit. HCC want to be given the tools to become more entrepreneurial, be given powers to decide where to spend and raise money free of Whitehall diktat.
- HCC were left with no choice but to agree to give the government reasons to increase Council Tax above the referendum limit because it is all they asked HCC to do after finally replying to its letters calling for a meeting.
- Hampshire County Council is well run. It has the second lowest council tax nationally. HCC sought the increase only due to the rising costs of social care, special educational needs and those increased costs and lack of funding from the government. HCC have used its reserves to balance the budget so far but this is not sustainable and by the end of the next financial year they will be gone.

## 2. Stubbington Outdoor Centre and proposed Secure Children's Home

There is much misinformation circulating about the proposals for a new Secure Children's Home at Stubbington. Once a consultation has commenced there is a process through which HCC must go to reach a decision.

- NO decision has been taken.
- The consultation responses have NOT been ignored.
- Both the Select Committee (last week) and Cabinet meetings (this week) will be held in public and will be broadcast on the HCC Youtube channel.
- There are confidential appendices to the report which include commercially sensitive information, and we will only need to go into a private session of either the Select Committee or Cabinet if anyone wishes to interrogate the information contained within these.

HCC are working very hard to find a solution to the challenge it faces over balancing the need for a Secure Children's Home (taking into account the constraints the Department for Education are placing on us in attempting to do so) vs the desire to maintain a study centre at Stubbington.

## 3. Struggling to keep your home warm in Hampshire? 🌡️

The Hitting the Cold Spots service, funded by Hampshire County Council, is here to help! 🏠🌟

Get FREE support from experienced advisers at the Environment Centre (tEC), an independent charity. They can assist with:

Resolving energy billing issues  
Saving money & energy at home



Advice line open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm 📞 Call: 0800 804 8601 📧 Email: staywarm@environmentcentre.com

Find more info & advice at Hitting the Cold Spots – the Environment Centre (tEC) and the council's website, including energy efficiency tips and grant details:  
<https://hantscoldspots.environmentcentre.com>

#### **4. Apprenticeships**

This National Apprenticeship Week, 10 to 16 February, Hampshire County Council is coordinating a series of special online and in-person events for both employers and those wishing to develop their career, to find out more about the benefits of apprenticeships, how they work, and the wide-ranging opportunities on offer across Hampshire.

[Apprenticeships – the gateway to a brighter future | Hampshire County Council](#)

#### **5. Devolution in Hampshire – public consultation**

Hampshire County Council has been accepted onto the Government's fast-track Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) – marking a significant milestone in the journey towards devolution for Hampshire and the wider area.

Hampshire residents are invited to have their say on once-in-a-generation devolution proposals for Hampshire and the Solent region in the eight-week public consultation launched today by central government.

[Devolution for Hampshire – have your say in the Government's consultation | Hampshire County Council](#)

#### **6. Reporting Highway Problems**

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/paving>

Broken or missing signs: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/brokensigns>

Faulty street lights: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/streetlight>

Faded or missing road markings: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/road-markings>

Problems with rights of way:  
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

**When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you.**