

# A Message from the Leader

## **There will be no increase in general Council Tax this year. This is to help ease the financial burden on residents.**

Following consultation, we will apply a three per cent social care precept to bills in 2018/19. This will be spent exclusively on helping to provide support and take care of our elderly and vulnerable adult residents.

I am proud of our track record in keeping Council Tax bills down as much as possible. Bills increased in 2017/18 for the first time in seven years, when we applied the social care precept to fund the vital support we provide to our elderly residents.

Barnet has the largest population of any London borough and is also home to one of the highest populations of older people, many of whom require care. The precept will generate an additional £4.9m per year, adding £2.89 per month to Council Tax bills for a band D property.

When consulted, residents were keen to keep capital investment protected. Through sound financial management, we have been able to make savings, whilst continuing to deliver what we had planned. I am pleased to say that means £856.8m will be invested between now and 2025.

We still have a total budget gap of £39.5m to fill by 2020, as pressures on our services continue, and our funding decreases.

We have successfully saved £144m between 2010 and 2017, whilst maintaining high levels of resident satisfaction and protecting frontline services as far as possible.

Taking care of our neighbourhoods remains a key priority for the council. In the last year, we removed 5,100 fly-tips, whilst also collecting 110,000 tonnes of household waste, with 40,000 tonnes being recycled or composted. We have resurfaced and improved 77 roads and 20 pavements, as well as filling in 1,150 potholes.

We will also continue to support our most vulnerable residents and work to make Barnet the most family-friendly borough in London. We have agreed to consult with residents about introducing a policy which will offer Council Tax relief to care leavers up to the age of 25, and we're proud of the fact that 100 per cent of our school children were offered a place on time.

We are pressing ahead with exciting plans to regenerate and invest in the borough, creating nicer homes for our residents to live in. In the last year, we have built nearly 2,000 new homes and have begun work on building two new sports centres with new pools.

I'd like to thank all the residents and businesses who contribute to making Barnet a great place to live and work. Working together, we make the borough better. We should all be very proud of that.



Richard Cornelius  
Leader of Barnet Council

