

COUNCILLOR LORNA FIELKER

Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY



Councillor.L.Fielker@southampton.gov.uk

03 March 2025

Dear Resident

When I became Leader of Southampton City Council last year, we faced a significant financial challenge following years of rising costs and increasing demand for services. As a result, the council was forced to rely on exceptional financial support from Government to balance our budget.

Over the past year we've made major progress to return the council to a sustainable financial footing while protecting services for local people. Our focus has been on getting best value for money from every penny of taxpayer money we spend.

Our programme to transform the way the council works has already saved £9.5m by making council services more efficient, reducing agency spend, embracing new technology and increasing income. While this has required some difficult decisions, we have protected the services local people value and rely on most.

In addition to our work to transform the council, we have welcomed a significant increase in funding from Government, bringing over £11m net into Southampton to deliver vital services for local people.

Together, these changes mean this year we are able to set a balanced budget, not just for this year, but for the coming three years – without the need for exceptional financial support from government.

Despite our progress, the financial outlook for councils remains challenging. Like other councils, we have taken the difficult decision to increase council tax by 2.99% this year, with an additional 2% specifically to support those in need of adult social care services.

In total this means the Southampton City Council element of council tax will increase by 4.99% this year, the equivalent of £1.74 a week for the average band D property. Your enclosed 2025/26 council tax bill sets out full details, including the precept for Fire, Police and Rescue which is not set by the council. You can read more about how your council tax money is spent at www.southampton.gov.uk/counciltax2025.

This increase will mean the council can continue to deliver and invest in local services, including keeping our streets clean and safe, protecting our libraries, leisure centres and green spaces, introducing new food waste collections, improving housing conditions and

continued.../

delivering new homes, supporting the most vulnerable expanding the local bus network and supporting local businesses. For example, our SmartCities card offers valuable benefits to residents, easy ways to access some services and a valuable discount for the Itchen Bridge toll. Find out more at <https://soton.cc/smartcities>.

Of course, it's not just about the council, we need our city to grow and thrive. That's why, alongside major local businesses, the universities and other partners, we recently launched our shared vision for the city centre to attract investment and new opportunities into the city.

While challenges continue to lay ahead, the steps we have taken to put the council back on a firm footing will ensure can deliver the best for Southampton over the coming year.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Lorna Fielker
Leader of Southampton City Council

The council is moving to e-billing which reduces the cost and the environmental impact of print and postage. We are encouraging all residents to go paperless and receive council tax bills by e-mail.

You can sign up for an online account – just scan the QR code using your smart phone.



SCAN ME