

Council Tax Level for 2022/23

Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	998
Brief description:	Proposal is to increase Council Tax by 2.95%
Date Completed:	11/01/2022 11:24:32 Version: 1
Completed by:	Steve Gadd
Responsible Service:	Finance
Localities affected by the proposal:	Whole County,
Who will be affected by the proposal?	All Council Tax Payers and service users within the County
Was this impact assessment completed as a group?	Yes

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach


 (3 out of 4 stars) Actual score : 30 / 36.

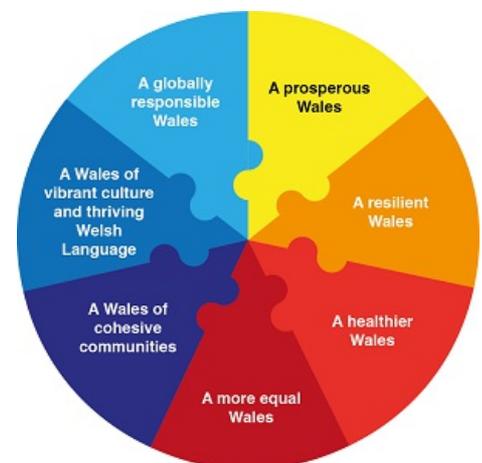
Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term	Proposed increase is to ensure that the Council can continue to improve services and invest in people and infrastructure. The proposals form part of a five year budget process to manage resources.
Prevention	The proposals include significant investment in zero Carbon and Biodiversity project. There is also significant investment in Social Care and Childrens' Services and Schools. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme helps ensure that those in most need are protected from the increase to Council Tax.
Integration	The increase form part of a balanced set of budget proposals that ensures investment in Corporate Priorities.
Collaboration	Full consultation of the overall proposals have taken place with Cabinet, Council, Budget Board, Unions, School Budget Forum and the Senior Leadership Team.
Involvement	A Communication plan with the public was agreed with the Comms Team in the Autumn to ensure that full involvement and consultation will take place next year. Full consultation has been undertaken this year with Cabinet, Council, SLT, Trade Unions, Group Leaders and the School Budget Forum. Press releases have clearly shown the level of Council Tax proposed and highlighting how to access the full report prior to both Cabinet and Council meetings.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals

A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Neutral
A more equal Denbighshire	Neutral
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Positive



Main conclusions

The impacts are broadly positive. This is because the Council Tax rise proposed supports a budget that protects existing service levels and increases investment in social care, schools and in investment in key priorities such as highways and the environment. This year the proposed increase of 2.95% is below inflation and the lowest increase for five years. Clearly the impact is the increased

tax paid by residents. The main mitigation is that around 25% of tax payers receive financial support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. However, it is recognised that for some taxpayers, the proposed rise will create an additional financial burden, particularly for those with relatively fixed incomes or little disposable income.

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may be affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	The budget process and the setting of Council Tax is an enabling activity which should allow services to develop proposals and services which will help achieve the Wellbeing goals. I believe the proposals for 2022/23 are a balanced package that allow for investment in services alongside ensuring that unavoidable pressures are funded. Hopefully this allows services to deliver on their plans.
Further actions required	Negative impacts on services have been minimised this year. Social Care and School have been protected completely and only efficiencies of 1% requested from other services. A thorough process led by the Budget Board scrutinised all proposals.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society	Proposals continue the investment in Carbon Zero 2030 target
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	Proposals include large investment in Highways infrastructure and flooding schemes
Economic development	Investment above will aid Economic development - further commitments include match funding for the Levelling-up Exercise
Quality skills for the long term	Investment for HR to help with recruitment and retention included
Quality jobs for the long term	
Childcare	

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society	High impact schemes such as Highways and flood defences obviously increase Emissions, especially during the construction phase
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	
Economic development	
Quality skills for the long term	
Quality jobs for the long term	
Childcare	

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
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Justification for impact	The budget process and the setting of Council Tax is an enabling activity which should allow services to develop proposals and services which will help achieve the Wellbeing goals. I believe the proposals for 2022/23 are a balanced package that allow for investment in services alongside ensuring that unavoidable pressures are funded. Hopefully this allows services to deliver on their plans.
Further actions required	Negative impacts on services have been minimised this year. Social Care and School have been protected completely and only efficiencies of 1% requested from other services. A thorough process led by the Budget Board scrutinised all proposals.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	Proposals continue the investment in Carbon Zero 2030 and Biodiversity target
Biodiversity in the built environment	Proposals continue the investment in Carbon Zero 2030 and Biodiversity target
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	Proposals continue the investment in Carbon Zero 2030 and Biodiversity target
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	Proposals continue the investment in Carbon Zero 2030 and Biodiversity target
Flood risk management	Proposals include large investment in flood defences

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	
Biodiversity in the built environment	
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	High impact schemes such as Highways and flood defences obviously increase Emissions, especially during the construction phase
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	
Flood risk management	

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The Budget supports the key services to help deliver a healthier Denbighshire.
Further actions required	Negative impacts on services have been minimised this year. Social Care and School have been protected completely and only efficiencies of 1% requested from other services. A thorough process led by the Budget Board scrutinised all proposals.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	Proposals include £3.1m above inflation investment in Social Care
Access to good quality, healthy food	
People's emotional and mental well-being	
Access to healthcare	
Participation in leisure opportunities	Funding for DLL has been maintained at existing levels which will hopefully allow DLL to flourish, especially if Covid restrictions come to an end in 22/23

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	
Access to good quality, healthy food	
People's emotional and mental well-being	
Access to healthcare	
Participation in leisure opportunities	

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	Whilst the Council Tax rise will increase the amount paid, it also allows the Council to increase funding to provision in key areas such as social care, waste services, children's services and schools and maintain service levels broadly. It also allows funding of a number of corporate priorities including Carbon Neutral targets, Flood Defence and investing in regeneration.
Further actions required	There will be an impact on the personal budgets of those who will not qualify for support: residents will pay more Council Tax - however there is support via the Council Tax reduction scheme for those who qualify for such support.

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	
People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes	Budget also includes provision to increase spending on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which helps protect vulnerable residents from Council Tax
Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage	

Negative impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	
People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes	Any Council Tax increase will impact on residents budgets, however the most vulnerable are protected
Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage	

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	The proposal to raise Council Tax supports a budget that protects front line services and protects the investment in new priority areas to enhance community resilience.
Further actions required	Residents will pay more Council Tax - however there is support via the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for those who qualify for such support. For those who do not qualify for Council Tax Reduction Scheme support, the Council works closely and proactively with Citizens Advice to provide help and support with personal budgeting to those residents who may require it. Flexible payment options are available over ten or twelve months.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	
Community participation and resilience	
The attractiveness of the area	The funding for biodiversity projects should help with attractiveness of the area.
Connected communities	Large investment in Highways infrastructure will help ensure communities feel connected
Rural resilience	Highways investment is particularly aimed to help the quality of the rural network

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	
Community participation and resilience	
The attractiveness of the area	
Connected communities	
Rural resilience	

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The proposal to raise Council Tax supports a budget that helps to maintain services received by the public.
Further actions required	The negatives are managed through Council Tax relief being available for those who qualify for the support, though clearly this does not address the impact on all residents.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh	The Council tax collection service and all correspondence is available through the medium of Welsh.
Promoting the Welsh language	
Culture and heritage	

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh	
Promoting the Welsh language	
Culture and heritage	

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	The proposal to raise Council Tax supports a budget that allows service levels to be broadly maintained in 2021/22 and so should not therefore adversely impact supply chains. Significant investment also included for reducing climate change and coping with its impact.
Further actions required	Residents will pay more Council Tax - however there is support via the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for those who qualify for such support. For those who do not qualify for Council Tax Reduction Scheme support, the Council works closely and proactively with Citizens Advice to provide help and support with personal budgeting to those residents who may require it. Flexible payment options are available over ten or twelve months.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	The proposal allows for service levels to be broadly maintained during 2022/23.
Human rights	
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	It also allows funding of a number of corporate priorities including Carbon Neutral targets, Schools, Social Care, Flood defences and match funding for the Levelling-Up fund.
Reducing climate change	The budget continues the significant investment in trying to reduce climate change through the 2030 targets and also ensuring the Council is resilient to change which we already know is happening (eg flood defences)

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	
Human rights	
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	
Reducing climate change	