



Your 2024/25

Council Tax Explained



Foreword from the Leader of the Council

Providing quality services that you can rely on - as cost effectively as possible - is fundamental to the work of Cannock Chase Council. Likewise, we are mindful of the continuing cost of living crisis and so we have kept the increase to our share of your Council Tax bill to 2.99%, which is below the current inflation rate and is the smallest needed to provide the services you value.

“ For the average Band D household that means a cost of £244 for the year (or £4.69 a week) for the many and varied services delivered by Cannock Chase Council. ”

In fact, we deliver services in over 40 different areas. Examples include collecting and recycling your waste, providing leisure and cultural facilities and services (via our partner Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles), award-winning parks and green spaces, housing and homelessness services, economic development to grow the local economy, planning and building control, and environmental health services including food safety and preventing fly-tipping.

Our priority areas and performance

We are currently half-way through our Corporate Plan for 2022-26, which has four priorities for the District: Economic Prosperity, Health and Wellbeing, The Community, and Responsible Council. You can see both our Corporate Plan and our Performance information on our website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk

What we have achieved over the last 12 months

Our achievements during 2023 and the early months of 2024 were:

- Putting in place opportunities to improve skills levels for our young people via our excellent relationship with South Staffordshire College: Digital Skills Academy and new Construction Excellence facility backed by the Council with UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) and local enterprise partnership money;
- Administering the £3m UKSPF scheme locally, including support to Staffordshire University to help local companies grow, digitise and adapt to climate change;
- Improving our play areas at Wellington Drive, Laburnum Avenue and Barnard Way (with Cannock Park progressing), and our tennis courts including a new online booking system;
- Introducing a new Council website and a customer portal;
- Working with Amazon and our partners, following the company's decision to close its fulfilment centre, by promoting new jobs and training opportunities for those affected and seeking help; and
- Progressing regeneration in Cannock town centre and via the development of a much-needed specialist health care centre off Avon Road.

Looking ahead to 2024/25

Over the next 12 months, we will continue to focus on delivering our services in a timely manner and to the quality you expect. Key activities will include:

- Allocating more funding from the UKSPF to support business, growth and jobs benefitting the whole District;
- Launching a new Health and Wellbeing strategy a key part of our Health and Wellbeing corporate priority;
- Submitting detailed planning applications for the regeneration of Cannock town centre;
- Moving forward our commitment to tackling climate change by helping the whole District reduce overall emissions following on from The Great Imagining Cannock Chase event in Cannock held in early March 2024; and
- Beginning to transform the way we work alongside our shared services partner, Stafford Borough Council, so we can become even more efficient and effective.

These key activities are in addition to the many day-to-day services we provide, many of them rather 'unsung' but all contributing to living and working successfully in our District.

Our Budget to fund our work in 2024/25

From its General Fund the Council aims to spend £15.703m (net income) in 2024/25. This money will be spent on providing all of the Council services.

Our separate Housing Revenue Account has a £24m budget to fund the District Council's Housing Services and comes from the rent that tenants pay us. An HRA Housing Investment Fund also exists to build new Council housing for those in high priority need and has been used most recently in Hawks Green and is funding new housing at the former Aelfgar School site in Rugeley.

Above all, we remain committed to protecting the frontline services you rely on during these challenging times. Our councillors and our staff will be doing their utmost over the next 12 months to serve you with the care and attention you rightly deserve.



Councillor Tony Johnson
Leader of Cannock Chase Council

Introduction

This booklet provides a brief overview of your Council Tax bill, how it might be reduced and the services you receive for your money.

In addition to this booklet, we have produced an online publication which provides further information. You can view and download a copy from the Council's website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/counciltax

Who does what?

Each of the organisations who charge you Council Tax provide a range of different services. This section highlights the main services each organisation provides.



Cannock Chase District Council	Staffordshire County Council	Staffordshire Commissioner (Fire and Rescue)	Staffordshire Commissioner (Police and Crime)	
Waste collection and recycling	Manages schools, nurseries and children's centres	Risk analysis and planning	Helps make Staffordshire safer	
Collection of Council Tax & Business Rates	Childcare help		Engaging with all of our communities	Helps reduce crime
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction	Provides adult social care	Culture, leadership and learning		Promotes community safety
Support for the homeless	Trading standards advice			
Parks & open spaces	Highway maintenance	Response and resilience	Works to reduce the number of casualties on our roads	
Planning & building control	Promotes regeneration			
Maintains car parks	Provides a range of cultural services			
Environmental health	Waste disposal			
Leisure services (managed by Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles)	Public health			
Election administration				

- Your Council Tax is based on the valuation band of your property and on two adults living in that property.
- Discounts, reductions and exemptions are available based on your circumstances.
- If you are unemployed or on a low wage, you may be able to get your bill reduced. If you think that you may qualify for this reduction, please see **page 7** for further details.



1 Discounts and premiums

Some unoccupied and unfurnished properties attract a discount for limited periods. Properties that have been empty for more than one year pay additional premiums. Other discounts depend on the number of adults in your house and their circumstances. If you are the only adult living in your property, you can apply for a 25% discount. Some people are not counted when looking at the number of adults in a property. These people include students and young people for whom child benefit is paid, people receiving or providing personal care, severely mentally impaired people and prisoners. The Council will consider applications for discretionary discounts based on individual circumstances.

For more information about points 1 to 4, please contact the **Council Tax team** on **01543 464285**

2 Reduction for people with disabilities

Your bill may be reduced if you (or someone who lives with you) need a room, an extra bathroom or kitchen, or extra space in your property to meet the required needs arising from a disability.

If you believe your bill to be incorrect, you can write to the Council to appeal. If you still believe the decision to be wrong, you can then appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service.

3 Exempt properties

Some properties are exempt from Council Tax such as those occupied only by students or unoccupied properties which were previously occupied by persons who are now in residential care.

4 Payment of Council Tax

If you are receiving all of the help that you can get with your housing and Council Tax costs, we may be able to help you pay your bill more easily.

Direct Debit is the most popular method for paying Council Tax as many people find that this helps them to manage their monthly budget. We can set up a Direct Debit over the telephone.

5 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

If you are unemployed or on a low wage, you may be able to get your bill reduced. Please see **page 7** for further details.

Council Tax valuation bands

The Valuation Office Agency which is part of HM Revenue and Customs (not your local Council) has put every property into one of eight valuation bands.

A full list of valuation bands is available online at www.vo.a.gov.uk



Band	Range of values (based on 1991 prices)	Proportion of Band D Council Tax Payable
A	Up to £40,000	6/9
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9
D	£68,001 to £88,000	1
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9
H	Over £320,000	18/9

Banding appeal

You may be able to appeal against the banding if you have just moved to a property, if the property has been structurally altered, or if the area in which your property is situated has changed.

Any queries about appeals and bandings should be made direct to the **Valuation Office Agency** on **03000 501501**



What do I do if I think I am paying too much Council Tax?

Please contact the **Council Tax team** on **01543 464285**, who will be happy to discuss this with you.

For adult social care authorities, Council Tax demand notices show two percentage changes: one for the part of the overall change attributable to the adult social care precept, and one for the part attributable to general expenditure.



Local Council Tax Reduction - Banded Discount Scheme

If you are on a low income and need help paying your Council Tax you may be entitled to a reduction in the amount you have to pay.

This help is means tested and you can apply for help if you are the person who is liable for the Council Tax bill. Whilst people both of working age and pensionable age can apply, the schemes we operate are different for each group.



For those people of pensionable age we must operate a national rebate scheme, however for working age people we operate a local scheme whereby a percentage discount, based on the income of the household, is deducted from the council tax bill. This is called a Banded Discount Scheme. Most Banded Discount Scheme claims will need to be made online; for people who may find this difficult our Customer Services Team are available to help.

Families, people in low paid jobs and the disabled are at the forefront of why the Banded Scheme has been introduced. Additional help is provided by disregarding Child Benefit income, there are no deductions made for any non dependants who live in the property, for example a family member (usually a son or daughter) who is working, and an additional percentage amount is awarded to anyone who is disabled.

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit then once we receive confirmation of the award we can usually apply the discount to the Council Tax Account automatically. If you are not in receipt of Universal Credit then don't delay, apply straight away.

The cut off for people with £6,000 or more in savings will now apply to all working aged people we think this is fairer.



You can check if you qualify for this reduction by using the online calculator www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/benscalc



For more information please visit our website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/benefits or contact our **Benefit Services Team** on **01543 464292**

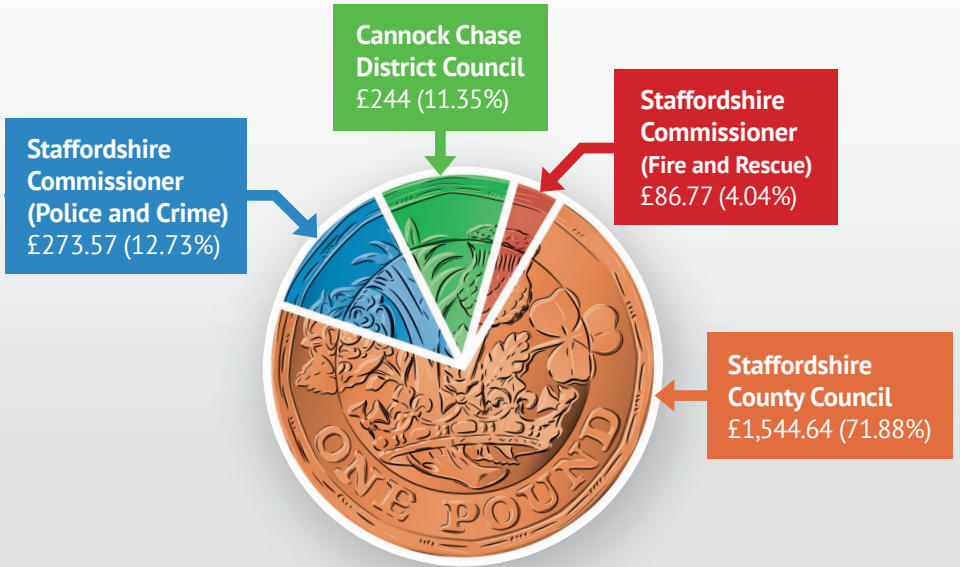




Where does your money go?

Cannock Chase Council provides its services for just **£4.69** a week.*

*Based on the average Band D Council Tax



Chase Matters

Residents magazine

Spring 2024

Latest news

Projects

What's happening in the District

Your digital magazine

Look out for our next edition early summer!

Saturday 9 March 10am - 4pm

Launch event at Chase Leisure Centre, Cannock

FREE EVENT

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