

Green councillors say 'increase council tax to invest in services'



Green councillors in Edinburgh propose £10m investment through council tax rise of 97 pence

£10 million to invest in services and to combat cuts in schools, social care and vulnerable children should be the capital's priority.

That is the message from Green councillors in Edinburgh as they propose a 4.3% council tax rise for next year: equivalent to an extra 97p a week for the average Band D property.

The council tax rise, which is backed by 63% of respondents to the council's budget consultation, would still leave the council having to make significant efficiencies and savings, but, according to the Greens, it would head off the worst cuts.

The £10m package includes

- Retaining a properly-funded school music service
- Blocking cuts to special schools and disadvantaged children
- Keeping budgets for social care for frail older people
- Supporting community centres, libraries and leisure centres.

On top of that, the additional money also allows the Council to recruit and keep more care workers to bridge a gap of 5,000 unmet care hours a week. And it sees a substantial investment in long term repair and maintenance of schools.

The proposals are outlined in a [blog](#) published today (Monday 18 January) by Green Finance spokesperson Cllr Gavin Corbett, ahead of the council budget meeting this Thursday (21 January).

Cllr Corbett said:

“This year’s budget round is by far the toughest since devolution in 1999, with the city council looking down the barrel of £85m worth of cuts. That includes cuts to schools, libraries, swimming pools, social care and community centres.

“That is why almost two-thirds of people responding to the council’s budget consultation backed a council tax rise. I agree with them and I am proposing 97p extra a week to reverse all of the worst cuts and also help tackle the mounting crisis in social care.

“So I believe the city council owes to it to the people of Edinburgh to have a proper grown-up debate about the right balance between new income and spending. To shrink away from that debate, to meekly accept whatever cuts central governments dole out is to infantilise the capital city, to impoverish vital services and to simply store up yet greater problems for the future.

“Let’s have that grown-up debate.”