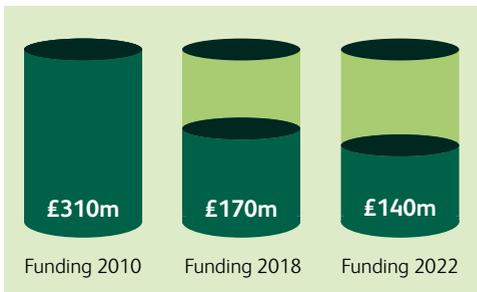


Your guide to Council Tax and the Budget 2019/20

Dear resident,

At the end of February, councillors joined me and approved the Council's budget for 2019/20. It's my third as the Mayor of Hackney, and it's a big task that gets harder and harder every year.

Since 2010, the Government has cut our core budget by £140m. That's about half, and by 2022 they'll have cut another £30m. In terms of our overall spending power, we've lost about £529 per person - the highest loss of any London borough.



While Ministers might like using the soundbite 'austerity is over', on the ground, in public services and local government, that is simply not true.

This year sees us come to the end of a three-year funding period. We made difficult decisions early on, which means that this year there are no headline savings and we continue to protect vital frontline services.

Over the years we've managed the huge financial challenge by, among other things, reducing management

and back office staff, investing in services to reduce costs in the long term, bringing services back in-house and renegotiating contracts.

After a decade-long freeze, we also had to start increasing Council Tax from 2016, and this year your bill will increase by 4.99%. Whilst a difficult decision, this is less than £1 a week for most households. But we've still got more to do. To put this in context, increasing Council Tax will raise an extra £3.8m a year - just 13% of the savings we need to make.

Over the next few years, we will have further difficult decisions to make, but our priority will always be to protect frontline services and make sure we can look after our most vulnerable residents.

Bridging The Gap

Despite the ongoing pressures, this year's budget is ambitious and sees us invest in the things that you tell us matter to you.

We know that some residents continue to be concerned about the pace at which Hackney is changing, so at the heart of this budget are decisions and investments to make our borough more sustainable and inclusive. By investing now, we are investing in the future, to build more resilient, supportive communities so fewer people need to rely on our services as financial pressures continue to grow in the years ahead.

That's why in this budget we will be investing £1.5m into our employment service, Hackney Works, to help local people access the opportunities that Hackney's new economy has brought. This will build on the work we've already done in this area, which has supported more than 4,500 residents into work or training and over 100 residents to start apprenticeships in the Council - three times more than in 2016.

We've also changed our procurement strategy to make sure that more of the money spent by the Council is spent in Hackney, using local businesses and tradespeople wherever possible.

We are standing up for Ridley Road Market and creative businesses in Hackney Wick to protect these important areas. We are also planning to invest £5million in converting unused council-owned garages into affordable workspace for local businesses - creating income to support services and new jobs.

We'll build 800 Council homes for social rent for Hackney residents. Despite this investment, as a result of the housing crisis we still have 13,000 households on our housing waiting list, and over 3,100 in temporary accommodation. This year we'll spend £13m on temporary accommodation, including a brand new, Council-managed hostel in Hackney for families.

Investing in Hackney

We are investing tens of millions of pounds into our Council homes and estates, ensuring that thousands of residents across the borough have the benefit of

new and modern roofs, windows, kitchens and bathrooms, as well as ensuring blocks are well-decorated and in good repair. Millions more will also be spent on ensuring homes in blocks meet modern fire safety standards.

We'll invest over £20m in improving our older school buildings, to make sure they're fit for 21st century learning.

By far our biggest area of spend is looking after vulnerable children and adults, through our social care teams. This year we will spend £145m.

We'll spend £9m on youth services, including targeted support and activities for all young people through our Young Hackney hubs, while launching the Young Futures Commission

We'll also continue doing those things you've come to expect - clean streets, outstanding parks and green spaces, and well maintained libraries.

This is an extremely challenging time for councils up and down the country, and Hackney is no exception. Over the next three years we will have some hard decisions to make, but I am determined that we should keep our ambitions high, keep on investing in what matters to local people and in making Hackney fairer, safer and more sustainable.

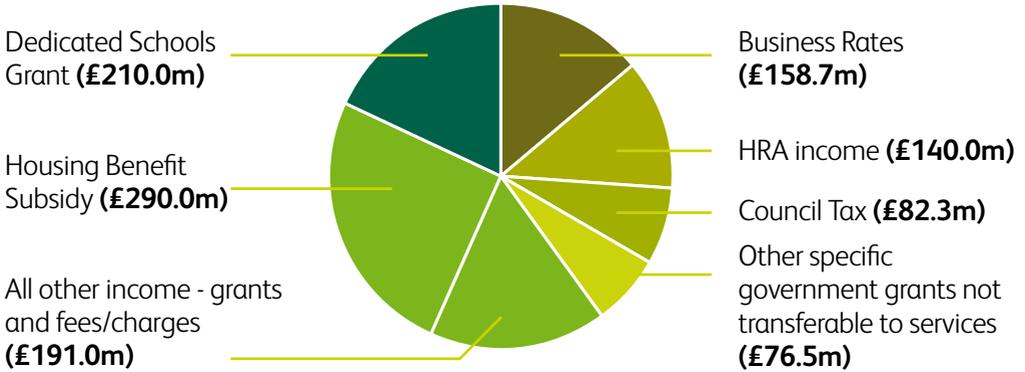


Philip Glanville

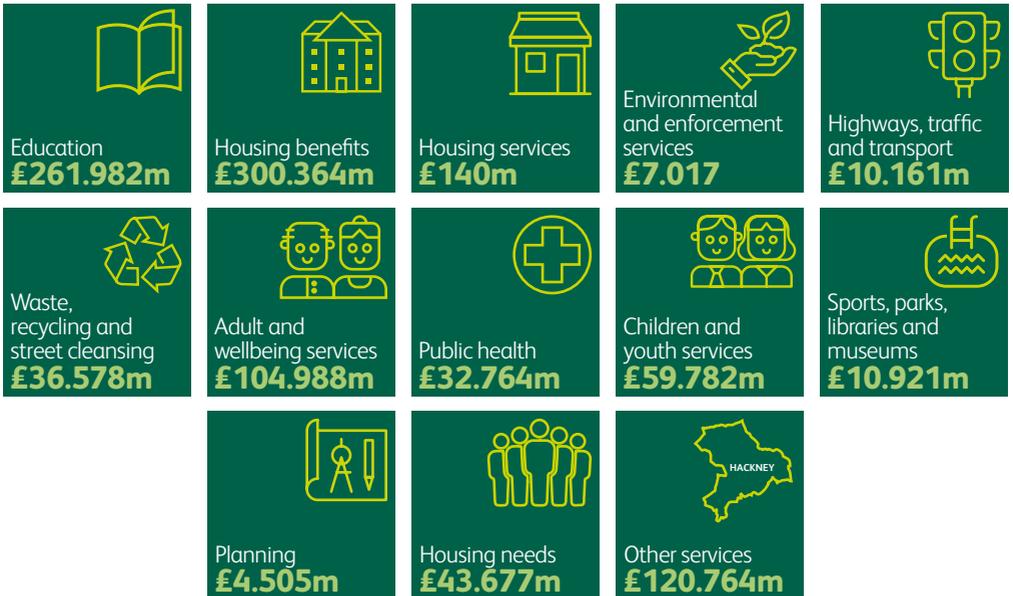
Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney

How the council spends your money

The Council manages a total budget of £1.1bn. This funding is made up of:



For more information visit www.hackney.gov.uk/budget



Where to find more information



For more information about the Council's budget, the Adult Social Care Precept and what the Council spends on services visit www.hackney.gov.uk/budget or write to: **Council Tax, Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, London, E8 1DY**

one account

Access Council services online in one place with One Account.

- Council Tax
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www.hackney.gov.uk

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Need support paying your council tax?

You may be entitled to support to help pay your Council Tax through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme or the Council Tax Discretionary Fund.

Working age people can receive an award of up to 83% of their Council Tax through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This award is means tested and available to those whose income is below an amount set by the Council.

Those who receive support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme but are unable to pay the remaining 17% of their Council Tax may be able to get extra help through the Council Tax Discretionary Fund – a pot of money to provide short term assistance to those in financial difficulties.

Those who apply for the fund are also able to access advice around debt and money management.