

Introduction from Joe Harris, Leader of Cotswold District Council



Dear resident,

This is one of the toughest budgets Cotswold District Council has ever had to set.

High inflation, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy price hike have had a huge impact on many residents' household budgets and these factors have had the same effect on the Council's finances.

Meanwhile, the Government has continued cut the amount of money it gives to councils, and has limited the amount of money we can raise through Council Tax to make up for these funding cuts.

Cotswold District Council is currently in a sound financial position, due to decisions we've taken in the last few years to raise charges and make services more efficient. However, this year the Government has not provided us with enough financial support to cover the costs of inflation. This means we have even less money to deliver the services you rely on and to improve our area.

We're looking at different and innovative ways we can fund and run our services in future. But, to be able to pay to protect the services residents rely on, we have had to make some tough decisions this year. This includes a small rise in your Council Tax, along with increased fees for the services we charge for, and changes to waste collection days.

I want to be honest with residents that, if we don't take tough decisions over the next couple of years, we risk ending up like other councils that are now in really difficult financial positions. Some councils have had to declare they are effectively bankrupt, leading to big tax rises, huge hikes in charges and services shutting down.

Our priority will always be to protect the most vulnerable in our district, and for those in financial difficulty we've got one of the most generous Council Tax support schemes in the country. You can find out more about this support by searching for 'Council Tax support' on our website.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Joe Harris', written over a faint background of icons including a house, a lightbulb, a tree, and a pound sign.

Cllr Joe Harris
Leader of Cotswold District Council



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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Cotswold District Council's priorities - how we build a better council and care for our Cotswolds

Cotswold District Council aims to be proactive and responsive to the needs of its residents and businesses and to build for the future while respecting the district's heritage.



Our priorities

Delivering Good Services.



Responding to the Climate Emergency.



Delivering Housing.



Supporting Communities.



Supporting the Economy.



Our principles

Rebuilding trust and confidence in the council by promoting a culture of openness and transparency.



Providing value for money for our residents and businesses by using our resources wisely and investing in the district's fabric and future.



Listening to the needs of our community and acting on what we hear.

Help if you are struggling to pay your Council Tax

We understand that council tax can be a challenge for some to pay and we have support in place to help those who need it. If you are on low income or claim benefits you could be entitled to help under our council tax support scheme.

For more information visit: www.cotswold.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport
If you are not online you can call: 01285 623035



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Balancing the budget

Against a backdrop of inflation
and government cuts

Explaining the Cotswold District Council
budget for 2024/25



Councillor Mike Every Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Finance balances the 2024/25 budget for another year

Explaining the Cotswold District Council budget for 2024/25

Our net budget for the 2024/25 financial year is £15.1m. This is funded through your Council Tax, a share of business rates paid by businesses in the District and grants from the Government. Since 2013, the Government has reduced the amount of ongoing funding significantly - around 50%.

Only 7% of the Council Tax you pay comes to Cotswold District Council. Most of it goes to Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire Police with your local town or parish council receiving the remainder. There is a breakdown of this on your bill

We use our funding to provide many services including waste collections, leisure facilities, fly-tip collection, environmental health and car parks among many others. We do not provide other services such as road maintenance, libraries, adult social care or public health, these are run by Gloucestershire County Council.

The Cotswold District Council part of this year's Council Tax bill, will rise by less than 10p a week (£5 a year) for the average band D household.

As you can see from the graphic on the next page, the Council Tax you pay totals £6.6m across the Cotswold District, provides just 16% of our total gross income.

Only 7% of the Council Tax you pay comes to Cotswold District Council



Where the Council's money comes from

38%

Government grants

32%

Service income, fees & charges

16%

Council Tax

14%

Business rates

Where the Council's money will be spent in 2024/25

7%

Land, legal & property

5%

Revenues & housing support

23%

Customer, HR, IT & other support services

25%

Environmental services & waste collection

5%

Organisational running costs

7%

Democratic services

10%

Planning & strategic housing

4%

Environmental & regulatory services

14%

Leisure & communities



What we delivered with your Council Tax last year

Last year we made great progress on our priorities to improve the Cotswolds for you as residents. On top of delivering over 50 services we achieved the following:



Our award-winning Crowdfund Cotswold scheme continues to be successful raising over £800,000 for local projects across the District.



We launched our Cotswold Home Solar scheme, helping local residents get solar power for their homes along with moving forward work to make council buildings more efficient.



We provided a wide range of support to help people through the cost of living crisis including helping set up our innovative Food Network to help local people access food for their families.



We continued to tackle fly-tipping in the district, issuing more fines and taking the decision to increase the fines issued to those caught fly-tipping.



We continued to help people stay active such as setting up seated exercise classes for those unable to travel and working with Mr Motivator on home exercise classes.



We helped build more affordable homes across the district, helping local people afford local homes and we plan to take more action on this over the next year.