**Explanation of the increase in the 2017/18 Council Tax bill.**

The following explanation only relates to the West Berkshire element of the Council Tax bill. For further details of the Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service precept and the Police & Crime Commissioner precept please refer to the web links below;

 <http://www.rbfrs.co.uk>

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/>

Last year, for 2016/17, Government allowed local authorities to increase council tax up to a threshold of 3.99%; 2% in respect to expenditure on Adult Social Care and 1.99% for other expenditure. As the bills indicate the Adult Social Care precept is attributable to West Berkshire Council.

For the year 2017/18, Government advised the threshold was increased to 4.99%, an additional 3% in respect to Adult Social Care expenditure and 1.99% in respect to other expenditure. Therefore the West Berkshire element/precepts have been calculated as follows;

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Adult Social Care precept \* | West Berkshire precept \* | Total West Berkshire element | Total West Berkshire % increase |
| 2016/17  | £25.27 (2%) | £1288.58 | £1313.85 | 3.99 |
| 2017/18 | £64.69 (2% + 3%)(£25.27 + £39.42)  | £1314.22 | £1378.91 | 4.95 |

\*relates to an average Band D property.

The 2017/18 ring-fenced Adult Social Care precept is a 3% increase on the 2016/17 entire Council Tax for West Berkshire. The amount on the 2017/18 bill therefore shows an increase of 3% for Adult Social Care and the total amount of the Council Tax that has been ring-fenced to date for Adult Social Care as being £64.69 (i.e., 2016/17 & 2017/18).

Further information in regards to the Adult Social Care element was/is provided in the leaflets enclosed with the annual bills.

The West Berkshire element is then added to the other precepts such as Police, Fire and town/parish precepts to give an overall total charge to pay. Comparing the ‘Band D’ average 2016/17 Council Tax charge to that of the 2017/18 charge,  the total charge has risen by 4.5%.

How the Council shows these figures on the bills is largely determined by legislation and we don’t have any leeway to change them. This has caused some confusion and we hope that this has clarified the position.

When the annual bills are produced next year more information and a clearer explanation will be provided.

Should you have any feedback in this respect then please email counciltax@westberks.gov.uk