

Meeting of:	COUNCIL
Date of Meeting:	28 FEBRUARY 2024
Report Title:	COUNCIL TAX 2024-25
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	GARETH JOHN, FINANCE MANAGER – GOVERNANCE
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	<p>Paragraph 3.1.2 (g) of the Financial Procedure Rules (FPRs) requires the Chief Finance Officer to recommend the level of Council Tax to be levied for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>It also has to fulfil its requirement under Section 33 and 34 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992</p>
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Council Tax requirement is £124,495,342. • The total Council Tax requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council is £101,746,816. • The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales precept is £19,561,085. • The total Council Tax requirement from Town and Community Councils is £3,187,441. • The Bridgend County Borough Council Band D equivalent is £1,834.41. • The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales Band D equivalent is £352.67. • The average Community/Town Council precept is £57.47. • The increases in council tax are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bridgend County Borough Council 9.5% ○ Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales 8.69% ○ Average Town and Community Council 9.11%

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Council with details of the council tax requirement for the County Borough Council, subject to Council approving the

Medium Term Financial Strategy on 28 February 2024, together with the requirements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Town and Community Councils, and to ask the Council to note the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band for 2024-25.

2. Background

- 2.1 The final budget proposals have been placed before Council for approval as the Council must calculate its budget requirement in accordance with Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and set the level of council tax for 2024-25.
- 2.2 Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires billing authorities to calculate the basic amount of council tax in a financial year. Section 34 of the Act further requires the billing authority to calculate the basic amount of council tax for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate, such as a Town and Community Council precept requirement.
- 2.3 The Council collects the council tax on behalf of the Town and Community Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales. The monies collected are then paid over to the relevant bodies in line with the amount they have included in their budget to be charged to households in the county borough of Bridgend.
- 2.4 The council tax base determines the amount of council tax which can be raised to fund the Council's budget and is the measure of the relative taxable capacity of different areas within the County Borough. The tax base represents the number of chargeable dwellings in the area expressed as Band D equivalents, taking into account the total number of exemptions, discounts and disabled band reductions, with the net tax base calculated by taking account of the Council's estimated collection rate.
- 2.5 When the council tax base for 2024-25 was approved by Council on 22 November 2023 the estimated collection rate was kept as 97.5% to reflect the current economic circumstances, including high inflation, and the number of citizens facing economic hardship, and taking into account current collection rates.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 Council is expected to approve the Bridgend County Borough Council budget for 2024-25 at its meeting on 28 February 2024. The proposed budget is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Net Revenue Budget 2024-25

	Revenue Budget 2024-25 £000
<u>Service Directorate Budgets:</u>	
Central Education & Family Support	30,217
Schools	<u>113,268</u>
<i>Education and Family Support</i>	<u>143,485</u>
Social Services & Wellbeing	104,535
Communities	30,447
Chief Executive's	22,425
Total Directorate Budgets	300,892
Council Wide Budgets:	
Capital Financing	7,052
Levies	9,635
Repairs and Maintenance	670
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	16,054
Apprenticeship Levy	750
Pension Related Costs	430
Insurance Premiums	1,363
Other Council Wide Budgets	22,879
Total Council Wide Budgets	58,833
Net Budget Requirement	359,725

- 3.2 The net budget requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council for 2024-25 is £359,725,154, and the amount to be funded from council tax is £101,746,816 as shown in Table 2 below. This equates to a council tax of £1,834.41 on a Band D property, a 9.5% increase from 2023-24. Due to the immense pressures facing the Council for 2024-25 onwards, and the level of service reductions that will be required, along with the challenging financial forecast going forward, unfortunately it has not been possible to hold council tax at the same level as 2023-24.

Table 2 – Net Budget Funding

	£	%
Revenue Support Grant	205,006,429	56.99
Non Domestic Rates	52,971,909	14.73
Council Tax Income	101,746,816	28.28
Total	359,725,154	100.00

- 3.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales has notified the Council that their precept for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 will rise to £19,561,085 which equates to a council tax of £352.67 on a Band D property, a 8.69% increase. The 2024-25 precept was agreed by the South Wales Police and Crime Panel on 6 February 2024.

- 3.4 For the 2024-25 financial year, the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales has stated that the following amounts are to be levied by the Council in respect of policing services, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Council Tax Bandings 2024-25 – Police and Crime Commissioner South Wales Precept

Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales	(£.p)
Band A	235.11
Band B	274.30
Band C	313.48
Band D	352.67
Band E	431.04
Band F	509.41
Band G	587.78
Band H	705.34
Band I	822.90

- 3.5 There are 20 Town and Community areas within Bridgend. Each Town and Community council is responsible for determining its own precept, which is then notified to the Council so that it can be reflected on the council tax bill.
- 3.6 The average council tax increase for the County Borough for 2024-25 is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Average Council Tax Increase 2024-25

	2023-24	2024-25	% change
Council Tax Base – Band D equivalents	55,007.82	55,465.69	0.83

	£	£	% change
Bridgend County Borough Council	1,675.26	1,834.41	9.50
Town and Community Council average	52.67	57.47	9.11
Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales	324.47	352.67	8.69
Band D property average council tax	2,052.40	2,244.55	9.36

- 3.7 The Council, as the billing authority, is required to formally approve the council tax for its area. Subject to Council's earlier approval of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2028, Council will have already approved the council tax requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council for 2024-25 to meet its net budget

requirement. The council tax requirement of the Council and its precepting authorities is set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Total Average band D Council Tax Requirement 2024-25

Authority	Requirement	Net Tax Base	Band D Council Tax (£.p)
Bridgend County Borough Council	101,746,816	55,465.69	1,834.41
Local Precepts			
Brackla Community Council	189,517	4,192.23	45.21
Bridgend Town Council	723,703	6,090.72	118.82
Cefn Cribwr Community Council	42,000	559.68	75.04
Coity Higher Community Council	120,969	4,195.59	28.83
Cornelly Community Council	150,000	2,568.88	58.39
Coychurch Higher Community Council	11,000	353.85	31.09
Coychurch Lower Community Council	47,600	675.95	70.42
Garw Valley Community Council	121,000	2,298.35	52.65
Laleston Community Council	282,698	5,049.93	55.98
Llangynwyd Lower Community Council	9,500	172.82	54.97
Llangynwyd Middle Community Council	72,000	1,043.36	69.01
Maesteg Town Council	357,242	5674.80	62.95
Merthyr Mawr Community Council	5,000	150.88	33.14
Newcastle Higher Community Council	53,637	1,862.34	28.80
Ogmore Valley Community Council	92,700	2,613.41	35.47
Pencoed Town Council	175,000	3,466.47	50.48
Porthcawl Town Council	486,675	8,226.97	59.16
Pyle Community Council	135,000	2,544.23	53.06
St Brides Minor Community Council	67,200	2,309.23	29.10
Ynysawdre Community Council	45,000	1,416.00	31.78
Average Town/Community Council Precept			57.47
Borough Budget Requirement (including Community Councils)	104,934,257	55,465.69	1891.88
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales	19,561,085	55,465.69	352.67
TOTAL	124,495,342	55,465.69	2,244.55

- 3.8 The Council is also required to approve the council tax charges for Band D properties for the chargeable financial year beginning 1 April for each of the 20 community areas and these are shown in Table 6 below. Subject to Council's earlier approval of the Medium Term Financial Strategy the Bridgend County Borough Council elements of these charges will have been approved. All calculations are for a Band D equivalent property.

Table 6 – Council Tax 2024-25 per Town and Community Council

Town or Community Council	Bridgend CBC £	Community Council £	Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales £	Total £
Brackla Community Council	1,834.41	45.21	352.67	2,232.29
Bridgend Town Council	1,834.41	118.82	352.67	2,305.90
Cefn Cribwr Community Council	1,834.41	75.04	352.67	2,262.12
Coity Higher Community Council	1,834.41	28.83	352.67	2,215.91
Cornelly Community Council	1,834.41	58.39	352.67	2,245.47
Coychurch Higher Community Council	1,834.41	31.09	352.67	2,218.17
Coychurch Lower Community Council	1,834.41	70.42	352.67	2,257.50
Garw Valley Community Council	1,834.41	52.65	352.67	2,239.73
Laleston Community Council	1,834.41	55.98	352.67	2,243.06
Llangynwyd Lower Community Council	1,834.41	54.97	352.67	2,242.05
Llangynwyd Middle Community Council	1,834.41	69.01	352.67	2,256.09
Maesteg Town Council	1,834.41	62.95	352.67	2,250.03
Merthyr Mawr Community Council	1,834.41	33.14	352.67	2,220.22
Newcastle Higher Community Council	1,834.41	28.80	352.67	2,215.88
Ogmore Valley Community Council	1,834.41	35.47	352.67	2,222.55
Pencoed Town Council	1,834.41	50.48	352.67	2,237.56
Porthcawl Town Council	1,834.41	59.16	352.67	2,246.24
Pyle Community Council	1,834.41	53.06	352.67	2,240.14
St Brides Minor Community Council	1,834.41	29.10	352.67	2,216.18
Ynysawdre Community Council	1,834.41	31.78	352.67	2,218.86

3.9 The resulting charges for each Band are set out in **Appendix A**.

3.10 The budget setting process is outlined within the Council Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules. The budget is set in accordance with the statutory provisions set out in the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 The climate change implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the environment because of this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The safeguarding and corporate parenting implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon Safeguarding and Corporate parenting as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 These are outlined within the report.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Subject to Council's earlier approval of the proposed net budget requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council of £101,746,816 for 2024-25 and a Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,834.41 for 2024-25. Council is recommended to:

- note the level of the precept from the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, as set out in Table 3:
- note the total Council Tax charges for Band D properties for 2024-25 for each of the Community Council areas as outlined in Table 6 and the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band as outlined in **Appendix A**.

Background documents

None