



East Sussex Fire Authority Council Tax and Budget Information 2019/20



East Sussex Fire Authority has agreed an increase of 2.94% in Council Tax. This means that Band D Council Tax will increase from £91.00 to £93.67 in 2019/20, providing a 24/7 emergency response for just £1.80 per week.

The decision comes as part of measures to help provide financial stability for the Fire and Rescue Service at a time when future funding from central government has become even more uncertain.

What you pay for fire and rescue

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Annual Cost	£62.45	£72.85	£83.26	£93.67	£114.49	£135.30	£156.12	£187.34
Weekly Cost	£1.20	£1.40	£1.60	£1.80	£2.20	£2.60	£3.00	£3.60

We make our communities safer

Fire Authority Chairman, Cllr. John Barnes, said:

“East Sussex Fire Authority is committed to providing an effective and efficient prevention, protection and response service to the communities it serves. The range of work we are involved in may surprise some – we have education visits to schools, teams carrying out safety visits in people’s homes and inspectors helping check businesses are meeting their legal duties when it comes to fire safety. We also work in collaboration with other organisations and emergency services to help make the most of our funding.”

To ensure that we can continue to work to make our communities safer at home, at work and on the roads, we have started preparing for a full risk based review of our services taking account of public views and demographic changes including expected growth in housing, population and road traffic.

To find out more about how we are doing this read about our Integrated Risk Management Plan on our website: www.esfrs.org/irmp

Our plans for the future (our revenue budget)

The additional income from Council Tax along with planned savings of £0.4m mainly from reductions in insurance and other support costs will help us balance the Authority's budget and will enable us to continue to invest in the Service's life-saving work as set out in our Integrated Risk Management Plan. Our revenue budget (for day-to-day spending) will increase by £0.9m. This includes an additional £0.15m investment in match funding the fitting of sprinklers in local high rise / high risk buildings, taking the total funding we have committed to this project to £0.75m.

The Authority has agreed to participate in the East Sussex Business Rates Retention pilot scheme, forgoing Revenue Support Grant in favour of keeping a much greater share of local Business Rates. It is estimated that this will gain an extra £0.55m in 2019/20 which will support services and local initiatives over the next two years.

What we spend

	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2019/20 %
Employees	27.2	30.2	77%
Running expenses	9.4	10.0	26%
Capital Financing	2.1	0.9	2%
Gross Service Expenditure	38.7	41.1	105%
Income & Specific Grants	-1.7	-3.8	-9%
Contribution to Reserves	1.1	1.7	4%
Net Budget Requirement	38.1	39.0	100%

How we are funded

	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2019/20 %
Government Grants	3.7	0.0	0%
Business Rates	7.9	11.6	30%
Council Tax	26.5	27.4	70%
Total Funding	38.1	39.0	100%

Investing for the future (our capital budget)

As well as our day to day spending, in 2019/20 we will be investing: £3.4m in new fire appliances and other vehicles and £3.4m in improving our buildings. This includes the initial phase of a £3.1m project to refurbish Preston Circus Community Fire Station and plans to share our accommodation at Lewes, Heathfield and Uckfield with other public sector partners which will help reduce our day to day running costs.

Income from the sales of our old HQ and other buildings, along with other money we have set aside will fund a £13.8m improvement plan for our estate over the next six years improving their efficiency and effectiveness and the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff. We expect this investment and other measures will reduce the day to day running costs of our Estate by 15-25%.

Read more in our Fire Authority papers: www.esfrs.org/fireauthority

