

The Government's Local Government Finance Settlement will leave West Berkshire Council among the hardest hit of all councils in the country.

The settlement sets out funding for councils for the next three years - up to 2028-29. While a three-year settlement will allow the Council to better plan its budgets, the figures show that West Berkshire will see one of the lowest increases in Core Spending Power nationally.

Core Spending Power being a measure used by government to show the total revenue funding a local authority has available to deliver local services through the local government finance settlement.

This includes:

- Revenue Support Grant
- Retained Business Rates
- Council Tax
- Applicable Government Grants

West Berkshire's Core Spending Power - which assumes council tax will increase at the upper limit of 4.99% each year - will rise by just over a third of the national average. Without those projected council tax increases, the Council would have seen an actual reduction in spending power.

The Revenue Support Grant, a key source of Government funding, will fall sharply from £27 million to £16 million in just two years - almost halving in a short space of time. By 2029, the Council's core spending power will be £191 million. With inflation at 3%, the cost of essential services such as adult and children's social care, waste services and debt repayments alone would consume virtually all of this.

Because of this, Council resolves to request that the Leader:

1. Writes to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), **The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP**, to request that the Government urgently review the proposed funding model being applied to West Berkshire Council to address the significant and unfair consequences to this Council's ability to deliver essential public services to our communities.
2. Writes to our two local MPs to ask that they support our efforts and urge MHCLG to address the negative impacts of the proposed settlement on West Berkshire Council, and request that this be reviewed as a matter of urgency.
3. Discusses this difficult situation with the Berkshire Unitary Authority Leaders and looks to develop a joint Berkshire wide response to this very distressing financial situation.