



**Corks Lane
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**MEDIA RELEASE
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BABERGH COUNCIL TAX INCREASE : "LESS THAN EXPECTED"

In the autumn Babergh District Council expected its part of the Council Tax bill to increase by at least 10% just to maintain services, and by at least 14% if a number of important service improvements were included.

All 36,000 households in the district were consulted, and, of the 2,300 households who replied, three-quarters wanted Babergh to at least maintain services, even if that meant a Council Tax increase of at least 10%.

But the position has improved. The Strategy Committee has considered the budget and level of Council Tax very carefully and are recommending a 9.75% increase in Council Tax. For a Band D property that will be an increase for the year of just under £10 (20p a week).

Councillor Colin Spence, Chairman of the Strategy Committee, says that the Council and the public have recognised the service and financial pressures facing the Council for the coming year. "This is a budget that enables the Council to maintain and improve some services which are important to the public, such as recycling and conservation. We would have liked the increase to be less than 9.75%, but that is not possible if we are to deliver the services residents want. However, it is less than anticipated in the autumn as a result of careful budgeting and a satisfactory increase in Government grant for next year."

Babergh's services only account for about 10% of the Council Tax bill, and the final outcome will also include the requirements of Suffolk County Council, the Suffolk Police Authority and the relevant Town/Parish Council. ENDS

For further information, please contact Colin Spence, Chairman of Strategy Committee, on (01787) 378184 or Geoff Kistner, Corporate Director on (01473) 825810 or Paul Simon, Communications & PR Officer on (01473) 826634