

Our Vision, Values and Priorities

Our Vision for Babergh

A district where strong and inclusive communities are built on active citizenship and where all citizens have the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

The Council's Priorities

In order to support strong and inclusive communities in the district, the council will concentrate on the following priorities:

- Increase the **supply of housing** that local people can afford to rent or buy
- Maintain a **safe, clean** and **sustainable** environment
- Promote **healthy living** and reduce **health inequalities**
- Give easy, convenient **access to quality public services**
- Raise individual **and community ambitions** and encourage **active citizenship**

The Council's Role

In delivering the priorities, the council's role is to:

- Provide responsible community leadership and influence in building, sustaining and helping to deliver a vision for the district that is shared by Babergh's citizens and the council's partners
- Create, support and sustain the social, economic and environmental conditions in which the shared vision for the district is realistically achievable
- Encourage and contribute to partnerships that help to deliver that vision
- Make decisions that best reflect and balance the diverse needs of individuals and communities in the district
- Maintain a skilled, flexible and motivated workforce to deliver the services that citizens need
- Make it easy for all citizens to access those services as conveniently as possible

Values

43 Councillors run the council. The political composition of the current council is 19 Conservatives; 16 Liberal Democrats; 7 Independent Group and 1 of no description.

The council has never had any form of overall political control and there has never been a Council Leader. This means that decisions about what is best for the district are reached by consensus.

As part of that consensus, we have agreed that we will base all of our actions on the following values:

- Recognition of individual, community and economic diversity within the district
- Treatment of all people with fairness, dignity and respect
- Provision of maximum individual choice within a framework of responsible citizenship
- Open and accountable decision making
- Responsible stewardship of public money and resources on behalf of all Babergh's citizens

The council's Financial Strategy supports this vision, values and priorities and our aim is "to do our best to achieve council tax increases that do not exceed the rate of inflation, whilst at the same time having a phased reduction in the use of reserves".

For the future, this will depend on the level of Government grant and our ability to make further savings and raise additional income. It may prove difficult in some years to provide services at the desired level and keep council tax increases to inflation.

A 3-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy exists and this is updated annually.

Additional expenditure of £40,000 results in a 1% increase in the council tax rate for this council.