

Council Tax 2019 to 2020



This leaflet forms part of your Council Tax Notice and should be read along with the information contained in the notice.

Council Tax is applied across a range of bands from A to H, with all bands having a relationship with band D, known as the multiplier. The Scottish Government changed the council tax multipliers for properties in Bands E to H from 1 April 2017. In addition to the 3% increase in Council Tax charge, if your property is in Band E to H, your 2019/20 notice will reflect this change. For more information on this change visit www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/council-tax-bands

• WATER AND WASTE WATER CHARGES

The Scottish Water and Sewerage Charges have increased by 1.6%. For more information contact customer helpline on **0800 0778778** or visit their website www.scottishwater.co.uk/unmeteredcharges

• THE BEST WAY TO PAY IS BY DIRECT DEBIT

If you opt to pay by Direct Debit you can pay over 10 or 12 months and can choose from five dates to assist with budgeting.

Set up a Direct Debit – Freephone 0800 163491.

For details of other methods of payment, see your Council Tax notice or visit www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk



• WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING COUNCIL TAX?

Council Tax is normally paid by the people who are living in the property. Civil partners, couples, joint owners or joint tenants are responsible, 'jointly and severally', for making the payment. 'Jointly and severally' means that the amount on the bill is not split into shares and we can choose to collect the full Council Tax charge from anyone legally responsible for it.

• HAVING PROBLEMS PAYING?

If you have missed any of your payments, please call us on **01698 403210** as soon as possible. Remember that if we do not know you are having problems paying, we cannot help you. If you are experiencing financial difficulties or you would like information or advice on debt management, budget planning or ethical lending help and assistance available at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/yourmoney

• DISCOUNTS

You may be entitled to a 25% Discount if you are the only adult in your home or there is another adult (18 years and over) who falls into certain disregarded categories such as student/student nurse, apprentice/modern apprentice. More information on discount categories is available at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/council-tax-discounts

• EMPTY PROPERTY DISCOUNTS

The discount is 10% or 50% where the property is not a liable person's sole or main residence depending on the circumstances. However, if the property is continuously empty for more than 12 months, it may be subject to an increased levy of 100% Council Tax charge. **More information is available at** www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/empty-property-discount

• DISABLED PERSONS REDUCTION

You can claim a Disabled Person's Reduction if certain adaptations have been made to your home; or if extra rooms are needed for the disabled person's wellbeing. More information is available at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/disabled-persons-relief

• EXEMPTIONS

You may be exempt from paying Council Tax for six months if your home is empty and unfurnished. This also applies to other categories such as occupied only by students; anyone under 18 years old; property occupied solely by people with severe mental impairment; where owner is deceased or resident in a nursing home or hospital. More information on exemption categories is available at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/council-tax-exemptions

• APPEALS

You may have the right to appeal against your council tax banding. Such appeals are currently only possible in limited circumstances.

You can appeal online at <https://www.saa.gov.uk/online-forms/council-tax-proposals/> **or in writing to The Lanarkshire Joint Valuation Board, Phone 01698 476000 Email:** assessor@lanarkshire-vjb.gov.uk

You may also appeal if you are aggrieved at the actions of the Council in calculating or collecting your council tax. Write to:

Head of Financial Solutions, PO Box 9060, Motherwell, ML1 1SH stating your grounds for appeal. If you are not satisfied with the response you do have a further right of appeal to a Valuation Appeal Committee. Please contact your local council tax office for further information on the procedures you must follow to submit a valid appeal. **You must continue to pay your Council Tax until a decision on your appeal has been made.**

• AUDIT SCOTLAND NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE

North Lanarkshire Council is participating in the Audit Scotland National Fraud Initiative, a data matching exercise which involves sharing data between public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud. Further information is available at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/national-fraud-initiative or the Audit Scotland's website (www.audit-scotland.gov.uk). For more information on how we process your data visit <http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/privacy>

● COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION (CTR)

If you are a low earner, a pensioner, or on benefits, and are responsible for paying Council Tax, you may be entitled to claim CTR of up to 100%. CTR will not cover Scottish Water's charges. You can complete an application online at www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefitcalculator.

If you wish to appeal your CTR assessment write to: **Head of Financial Solutions, PO Box 9060, Motherwell, ML1 1SH**

If you are still dissatisfied with your decision you can seek an independent ruling from the Council Tax Reduction Panel who will conduct a further review.

An application should be made directly to them by yourself or representative. Further Appeal Information is available via their website

<http://counciltaxreductionreview.scotland.gov.uk> or by telephoning 0141 302 5840.

● SPENDING ON OUR SERVICES

Council Tax Notice 2019-20 – Analysis of Service Expenditure

	2019-20 Net Expenditure £'000	2018-19 Net Expenditure £'000	Change from 2018-19 £'000	%	Band D Council Tax Equivalent £
Chief Executive	48,440	53,493	(5,052)	(9.45)%	385
Enterprise & Communities	114,954	116,765	(1,811)	(1.55)%	914
Education & Families	456,443	434,946	21,496	4.94%	3,628
Health & Social Care	148,689	139,569	9,120	6.53%	1,182
Joint Boards	12,403	12,237	166	1.36%	99
Totals	780,929	757,010	23,919	3.16%	
Financed by:-					
Government Grants	527,453	504,534			
Non Domestic Rates	107,252	114,474			
Use of Balances and Reserves	4,729	2,502			
Total needed from Council Taxes	141,494	135,500			
Band 'D' council tax 2019-20	1,164.87				
Band 'D' council tax 2018-19		1,130.94			
Scottish average band 'D' council tax for 2018-19	1,207.85				
Council employees (full time equivalent)					
2018-19		12,149			
2019-20 estimate	12,106				
decrease	43				

Comparison of council expenditure proposals per household with Government provisions

Expenditure figures assumed by Government in Aggregate External Finance provisions (grant support)	£4,876
Proposed spending by council on comparable basis	£5,137

Revenue Budget 2019-20

North Lanarkshire Council set its net budget for 2019-20 at £780.929 million, of which £634.705 million (81%) is estimated to be funded by government grants and non-domestic rates, £141.495 million from council tax, and £4.729 million from one-off Council balances.

The Band D council tax level will increase by 3% to £1,164.87, continuing the trend of a council tax rate below the Scottish average. With council tax levels ranging from £776.58 (Band A) to £2,853.92 (Band H), your council tax helps fund a variety of much needed services to the community including: educating children, supporting the most vulnerable members of our society, improving and maintaining our roads and local environment, and providing cultural, leisure and recreation facilities.

In setting its 2019-2020 budget, the Council has continued its commitment to the Club 365 initiative, investing £1 million to provide free meals to pupils at weekends and holidays. In addition the Council established a Community Investment Fund for capital investment in the communities.

As in previous years, the Council continues to face challenging financial times, with its 2019-2020 government grant showing a decrease of 1.7% on the previous 2018-2019 grant level on a like for like basis, despite the Council facing significant cost pressures. Reflecting ring-fenced and directed funding an overall increase of 2.5% in funding was received. However, the Council has set a balanced budget, which per the service expenditure table provided, illustrates additional spend of £23.919 million compared to the 2018-2019 position.

In setting its 2019-2020 revenue budget, the Council has therefore:

- Funded unavoidable cost pressures totalling £23.766 million in respect of employee costs, contractual obligations and strategic priorities;
- Approved base budget adjustments totalling £13.236 million to reflect efficiency measures undertaken, including staff restructures. These base budget adjustments significantly reduced the potential budget gap and the consequent need for savings;
- Approved savings totalling £13.830 million, and service enhancements of £1.026 million
- Approved the use of £4.729 million of the balances it holds;
- Remained committed to protecting and providing vital services required by its community.

The number of posts within the Council is estimated to decrease by 43 (0.35%) to reflect the reconfiguration of services which result from the Council approving service restructures and the 2019-20 savings package noted above.