

# Your Council Tax/Budget Guide

## 2019/20



Respectful  
Positive  
Supportive

OUR PEOPLE  
Our place  
19-23 FEBRUARY

OUR PEOPLE  
OUR PLACE  
Our Future



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## Our People, Our Place

Our people and places make South Ayrshire and we have a clear and ambitious vision of what we want to achieve for them and what we will do as a Council to support them.

We want South Ayrshire to be the best it can be and for all people and places to have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

To achieve this, we're working to deliver against six strategic objectives that provide the framework for everything we do as a Council:

- Effective leadership that promotes fairness
- Reduce poverty and disadvantage
- Health and care systems that meet people's needs
- Make the most of the local economy
- Increase the profile and reputation of South Ayrshire and the Council
- Enhanced environment through social, cultural and economic activities

Through these objectives, we will tackle inequalities, injustice and disadvantage by making the best use of available resources and targeting these resources where they are needed most.

You can find out more about the objectives and the outcomes we want to achieve in [Our People, Our Place – Council Plan 2018-22](#).

# Our Council

The Council is led by the 28 Councillors elected by the people of South Ayrshire. There are eight Council wards, each served by either three or four Councillors, depending on population size.

You can contact any of your local Councillors if you require information, advice or assistance.

Councillors are supported by Council employees who are led by the Chief Executive and our Directors for People, Place and the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

If you need to contact the Council:

- Visit [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- Email [customerservices@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- Call **0300 123 0900**

Our roads and transportation service is provided by the Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA), which is a shared service with East Ayrshire Council. To contact ARA about roads, lighting or bridges:

- Visit [www.ayrshireroadsalliance.org](http://www.ayrshireroadsalliance.org)
- Call **01563 503164**

The South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership is responsible for the planning, funding and delivery of a range of community health services and social work/social care services for older people, adults, children and families. If you need to contact the Partnership:

- Email [sahscp@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:sahscp@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- Call **01292 612419**

# Our Budget

For 2019/20, the money we have to spend comes from Scottish Government grant funding (£209.2 million, which includes non-domestic rates income), Council Tax income (£56.8 million) and the use of uncommitted Council reserves (£1.8 million).

We're spending £193.4 million on Council services and allocating £74.4 million Council funding to the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership – an increase of 5.4% on the previous year and a record-breaking level of funding.

We're also working to deliver an extended ten-year £347 million capital programme 2019/20-2028/29, which will transform our people and places.

Full details of the budget set by Councillors are available in the [budget book](#).

# Council Tax

For 2019/20, Councillors approved a Council Tax increase of 4.79% per cent, which will raise Council Tax for a Band D property in South Ayrshire by £58.64 - the equivalent of 16p per day.

Band	2018/19	Increase	2019/20
A	£816.15	£39.10	£855.25
B	£952.18	£45.61	£997.79
C	£1,088.20	£52.13	£1140.33
D	£1,224.23	£58.64	£1,282.87
E	£1,608.50	£77.05	£1,685.55
F	£1,989.37	£95.29	£2,084.66
G	£2,397.45	£114.84	£2,512.29
H	£2,999.36	£143.67	£3,143.03

# Message from Council Leader Douglas Campbell



I'm proud to say that people, places and priorities were once again at the heart of the Council's spending plans as we set the revenue, or day-to-day, budget for 2019/20 and agreed an extended – and record-breaking – capital investment programme for 2019/20-2028/29.

An important part of this was the feedback from more than 2,000 people who took part in this year's budget engagement to let us know about the services and priorities that matter to them.

My thanks to every single one of you who got involved – I can assure you that we took on board your views when making the difficult, but necessary, decisions required to deliver a balanced budget.

I know for many of you, the most important decision we had to take related to the level of Council Tax increase. As you know, the Scottish Government gave Councils the power to raise Council Tax by up to 4.79% and we did decide to raise levels by the maximum amount.

In real terms, this equates to an increase per household of between 11p and 39p per day – depending on the Council Tax band of the property. An average Council Tax Band D property will see a rise of 16p per day.

We really thought long and hard about this, but the harsh reality is that the alternative would have been closing facilities or stopping services – in other words, making far more drastic cuts to the services that people want and need and we were not willing to do that.

Instead, we took on board the feedback that people are willing to pay more to protect and maintain services, allowing us to focus our resources where they are needed most and where they will make the biggest difference.

In doing so, we have been able to fund new initiatives that will help reduce inequalities and make a real difference for people and places, especially the most vulnerable in our communities:

- £60,000 to extend free school meals to Primary 4 children in the most deprived areas
- £107,000 to enhance the maintenance programme for grass pitches in rural areas
- £50,000 to improve the maintenance programme for all-weather pitches
- £35,000 to create a new Heritage Museum in Ayr town centre
- £55,000 to maintain campus cops in all eight secondary schools,
- £60,000 to extend our Christmas lights funding.

We have also been able to minimise the impact of budget savings totalling £7.6 million to protect important frontline services.

Within our revenue budget we have allocated an unprecedented £74.4 million to the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Combined with a further £8.3 million directly from the Scottish Government, this means £82.7 million to support health and wellbeing and help improve lives across South Ayrshire.

In our capital investment programme, a total of £347.2 million will be spent over the next ten years – with £72 million invested in 2019/20 alone – to transform towns and villages and benefit every single person across South Ayrshire.

More than £113 million will be invested in our schools and early years facilities over the next decade. This includes new schools for Girvan Primary, Carrick Academy in Maybole, Glenburn Primary and St Ninian's Primary shared campus in Prestwick, and Sacred Heart Primary in Girvan as well as a range of school refurbishment projects.

To support the expansion of early years provision from 600 hours to 1,140 hours for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds by 2020, a total of £12.7 million will be invested in early learning and childcare projects to ensure children in South Ayrshire get the best start in life.

Almost £50 million of the programme will be spent enhancing sport and leisure facilities across the area. This includes £40 million for a new leisure facility in Ayr town centre, £7.1 million for additional enhanced sporting facilities at Craigie Sporting Centre, and £845,000 for an all-weather pitch in Girvan.

An additional £9.5 million has been added to the programme for road reconstruction and improvement, taking the total over the ten years to £17.5 million, while more than £5 million has been allocated for street-lighting and LED replacement.

Funding of £21 million has also been included in respect of investment in Prestwick Airport as part of the Council's contribution to delivering the Ayrshire Growth Deal, which is being supported by funding of £206 million from the UK and Scottish Governments.

Overall, our budget sets out a bold and ambitious programme of investment that will touch the lives of everyone in South Ayrshire and change lives for the better.

It shows that when it comes to delivering positive outcomes for our people and places, we are well and truly walking the walk and doing exactly what we set out to do when we came into power two years ago.

Our budget not only reflects our ambitions for our people and places, but sets out how we are going to turn those ambitions into reality and create a legacy for generations to come.

It will create a stronger South Ayrshire, change lives and make lives, give people hope for a better and brighter tomorrow, and shape our people, our places and our future.

# Net expenditure on Council Services

Directorate		2019/20 Total Net Expenditure
		£m
Chief Executive's Office		18.931
People		119.939
Place		39.107
Care (funding delegated to South Ayrshire Integrated Joint Board)		74.393
Transport Subsidies and Concessionary Fares		2.086
Miscellaneous Services:	Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board	0.697
	Other Services	0.478
	Capital Charges	12.187
		<b>267.818</b>

## Financed by:

Government Grants	166.705
Non-Domestic Rates	42.462
Total Government support	209.167
Use of Surplus/Funds	1.818
	210.985
<b>Funding required from Council Tax</b>	<b>56.833</b>

## Comparison with Government Provision for Current Expenditure

	£ per dwelling	Calculation of Net Expenditure	£m
Expenditure figure used by Government in Aggregate External Finance (Government support) calculation	4,687	Gross Expenditure	340.489
		LESS: Fees, charges and other income	72.671
Proposed spending by Council on comparable basis	4,917	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>267.818</b>

# and Calculation of Council Tax Band D

(RESTATED) 2018/19 Total Net Expenditure	Change from 2018/19		Band D Council Tax Equivalent
£m	£m	%	£
19.189	(0.258)	(1.34)	427
106.359	13.580	12.77	2,706
43.011	(3.904)	(9.08)	883
70.665	3.728	5.28	1,679
1.986	0.100	5.04	47
0.697	0.000	0.00	16
1.679	(1.201)	(71.53)	11
12.827	(0.640)	(4.99)	275
<b>256.413</b>	<b>11.405</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>6,045</b>

162.839
38.299
201.138
1.510
202.648
<b>53.765</b>

3,763
959
4,722
41
4,763
<b>1,282.91</b>

	South Ayrshire Council	Scottish Average Band D
Band D Council Tax 2018/19	£1,224.23	£1,208.00

Council Employees (Full-Time Equivalent)	
At 31st December 2018	4,467
At 31st December 2017	4,355



# Your Council Tax

## How and when do I pay?

Direct debit is the easiest way to pay and it's quick and easy to set up – see [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/pay-council-tax](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/pay-council-tax) to set up online or call 0300 123 0900. Full details on all payment options can be found on the back of your Council Tax notice.

## Who has to pay Council Tax?

Council Tax is normally paid by the resident owner or tenant of the property.

Husbands and wives, couples and joint owners/tenants have joint liability for Council Tax, and we can choose to collect the full amount from anyone who is legally responsible for it.

## Exemptions, discounts & variations

Some properties may be exempt from Council Tax – for example, if they are unoccupied and unfurnished, or if they are occupied solely by students.

You may be entitled to a 25% discount if you are the sole adult aged 18 or over in your home, or if there is more than one adult resident but they can be disregarded due to personal circumstances for example, they are a full time student.

A Disabled Person's Reduction may be available if there are special features or facilities in the property to meet the disabled person's needs.

Long Term Empty Properties may be subject to a variation in the level of Council Tax due of up to 200% of the charge.

Full details of all exemptions and discounts can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/counciltax) or by calling 0300 123 0900.

## Change of circumstances

You must let us know if there is a change to your household circumstances that could affect your Council Tax – for example, if you receive a discount or exemption such as the single person's discount and the conditions no longer apply.

## Contact us online

You can tell us about a change of address, set up a Direct Debit, apply for Single Occupier Discount or request a copy of your bill.

### **What if I can't afford to pay?**

You can apply to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which was created to help people on benefits or on a low income. The basic amount of reduction depends on your (and your partner's) income, capital, personal circumstances and the amount of Council Tax payable.

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme does not apply to water and sewerage charges.

However, households with two or more adults may be entitled to a separate reduction in these charges of up to 25%. The reduction in water charges is applied automatically – where eligible – based on your entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.

The Scottish Welfare Fund also provides assistance to people who are on a low income and are experiencing exceptional pressures or are in a crisis situation.

You can claim Council Tax Reduction and find out more about benefits at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/housing-benefit/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/housing-benefit/)

### **What happens if I don't pay?**

If any instalment is not paid by the due date, you will be given a written notice requiring you to pay it within seven days. If this instalment is paid and you subsequently default in a monthly payment, a further reminder will be issued requesting that instalment be brought up to date.

No reminder will be issued in the event of any further instalment remaining unpaid after the due date and the full year's balance becomes due immediately.

If you do not pay the outstanding instalment(s) quoted in any reminder, you immediately become liable to pay the arrears plus the amount due for the remainder of the year.

The Council can take legal proceedings for recovery of the total amount due after serving a notice requiring payment of that balance within 14 days.

If legal proceedings are taken, the Sheriff will grant what is known as a Summary Warrant against you. This will result in the addition of a 10% surcharge to the Council Tax outstanding and allows the Council to employ a Sheriff Officer to recover the arrears by carrying out an attachment and arrestment of wages, bank accounts, etc.

Any expenses incurred by the Sheriff Officer are also payable by you in addition to the 10% surcharge.

# Money Advice

A free, confidential, information and advice service is available to assist with welfare rights and issues related to money and debt advice. Further information can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/information-and-advice-hub/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/information-and-advice-hub/) or phone 0300 123 0900

# Further Information

Further information about Council Tax can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/counciltax).

Further information about Non Domestic Rates can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/businessrates/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/businessrates/).

Further information about Benefit Services can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/housing-benefit/](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/housing-benefit/).

Or contact us at:

## **Council Tax**

0300 123 0900 or [council.tax@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## **Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

0300 123 0900 or [benefit.services@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:benefit.services@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## **Non-Domestic Rates**

01292 612671 or [business.rates@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:business.rates@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Enquiries about the valuation band (domestic properties) or rateable value (non-domestic properties) including any appeals should be directed to Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board, 9 Wellington Square, Ayr KA7 1HL on 01292 612221 or [assessor@ayrshire-vjb.gov.uk](mailto:assessor@ayrshire-vjb.gov.uk).

## **Appeals**

Appeals on the grounds that you have been improperly charged should be made in writing to the Service Lead Revenues and Benefits at the address shown below within 28 days of receiving your bill.

If you have a comment about any aspect of our service, or a suggestion about how we can improve our service, please let us know by writing to:

**Service Lead Revenues and Benefits,  
South Ayrshire Council,  
PO Box 31,  
Ayr  
KA7 2PL**