

# Your borough, your money

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These are unprecedented times for Dudley Council with continuous reductions in funding from national government putting intense pressure on local services.

To help meet this demand, there will be a 3.99 per cent increase in our element of the council tax bills, the first increase in six years.

This includes accepting a government offer to raise the amount you pay by 2 per cent to support the most vulnerable adults and elderly people in our borough, as part of our commitment to protecting these people. It also includes a 1.99 per cent increase to help us continue delivering the services which are important to you, **but rest assured this will still mean you continue to pay the lowest council tax in the West Midlands and one of the lowest in the country.**

Almost 2,000 of you responded to our Big Question budget consultation, which showed that while many of you want the council to continue to run the services important to you, it also showed that people recognise the importance of the community having a big influence on the work of the council.

As a community council we are working more closely with our volunteers than ever before to help change the way we deliver services and tackle these unprecedented reductions in government funding.

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## Combined authority

Twelve local authorities and three Local Enterprise Partnerships are working together to form a Combined Authority for the West Midlands.

The government is considering whether it is appropriate and in the region's best interests to form an authority, which could see powers move from Whitehall to the West Midlands. The new body will not replace any existing councils and there will not be one new single authority as councillors in each area will still be accountable to the people who elected them.

Dudley Council will continue to deliver services and keep our identity but on the big decisions we will have the powers and resources to work together with our neighbouring authorities.

For example the emerging Combined Authority has struck an £8billion investment plan with government for the West Midlands, which will help bolster more public transport, jobs, investment and housing in Dudley than ever before.

For more information about the proposed combined authority visit [www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/](http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/) To find out what it means and does not mean for Dudley visit [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk)



## Your community council's priorities over the coming year

More than ever before we are committed to listening to your ideas about how services should be run in line with our community council vision. We have made significant progress through award winning initiatives such as the online community forums and the e-bulletin email updates as well as the Big Question and Love Your Community campaign.

We have used what you have told us to shape how we prioritise services, including growing the economy and creating jobs, making our borough a cleaner and greener place and creating stronger and safer communities. We can do this by working with communities to help them maximise their potential so they rely less on council services, reducing our business costs by making better use of our online facilities and working closer with partners to share buildings and reduce costs.

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## Get involved with your community council

There are now more ways than ever before to report and request information from the council as well as get involved with how services are run across the borough.

People can join the 70,000 people already signed up to our e-bulletin which provides monthly information on the latest news and events from the council. Just email your postcode to **community.council@dudley.gov.uk** to sign up.

You can report issues such as fly-tipping, broken street lights, potholes and much more online at **www.dudley.gov.uk/report-it** or by using the new council smartphone app available for download on major app stores. People can also tweet via **@DudleyPlus**, email **dudleycouncilplus@dudley.gov.uk** or call **0300 555 2345**.

People can also write to **Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle Street, DY1 1LQ**

There are also 10 community forums running throughout the year where people can raise local issues with their ward councillors and discuss ideas.

Find out more at **www.dudley.gov.uk**



**@DudleyMBC**

**@DudleyPlus**



**Dudley Borough**

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To support economic growth there are lots of events and activities in all of our towns across the borough, including the Black Country's biggest Big Wheel, the Free Radio DY Eye, which will be rolling into Stone Street, Dudley from mid March. For more information visit **www.discoverdudleyevents.co.uk** or for sponsorship opportunities call **01384 818216**.

