



News Release

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How your council spends it's money

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Images attached below

In this era of austerity and continued funding cuts from central government, it is easy to lose sight of the work that your district council continues to do, day in day out, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, despite a reducing budget.

From licencing and environmental heath inspection, to planning enforcement and waste collection, South Hams District Council spends approximately £43m a year. This has been reduced by £7 million over the last six years.

This year further efficiencies and savings including the council's transformation programme (T18), means that the council is achieving annual savings of £3.9 m, meaning that South Hams once again has managed to protect all statutory services from cuts.

These figures have recently been released in the council's annual report, which goes on to spell out what the council spends money on and what their plans are for the coming year.

Leader of the council Cllr John Tucker said: "I urge all South Hams residents to take a look at the report. Many households only have reason to deal with us for council tax and waste collection, but the council provides so many more functions which are incredibly valuable to the smooth running of our district. Food inspections at your

local restaurants, cleaning your public conveniences, inspecting your play parks, preventing homelessness, and looking after listed buildings.

“Despite the huge challenges facing all local government, we have exceeded expectations and have continued to deliver the services that you need in the face of further cuts.

“The cuts have not ended, we know our revenue support grant (the money given to us by government to pay for services, will go completely next year, but we will continue to work hard to deliver for our residents.

Last year the council spent 288k on community grant funding and £487,000 on disabled facilities grants. They also collected 2.2 m household waste collections, handled 170,000 calls in the call centre, delivered 148 affordable homes, processed 2,300 planning applications and collected 800 fly tips.

Throughout the last 3 years the council has gone through a massive transformation and this year the benefits of that transformation can clearly be seen in the annual report, not just in the savings which have been achieved, but also in the performance of the council.

The time it takes the council to process a housing benefit claim has been reduced from 42 to 19 days, 98 % of planning applications have been determined on time, call volumes have been reduced by 25% and the council jointly won IESE’s council of the year award with West Devon Borough Council.

Looking forward, the report proposes a 3 year programme providing over £½ million investment in local play parks, £1.88 million to deliver housing to meet the needs of local people, 5 year coastal asset repairs programme worth £1.5 million in engineering works, additional business units in Totnes and Dartmouth, Salcombe harbour investment for additional pontoons, upgraded shower/ toilet facilities & information office and further assets transfers to communities to allow them to take on and have greater control or their locality.

The full report can be viewed on the [South Hams Website](#)

www.southhams.gov.uk

Please be aware that telephone calls to and from the Council may be recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

Attachments

- 2017/18 Actions [2017/18 Actions](#)
- A few things the council spent money on last year [A few things the council spent money on last year](#)
- Performance Statistics [Performance Statistics](#)