

Statement on behalf of our Chief Financial Officer about the finance settlement

We've received notification of the provisional local government finance settlement from central government.

We will be receiving a 5.1% increase. This includes an assumed 2.99% increase in council tax and 1% growth in the number of households that will pay council tax next year. The remaining increase is therefore marginal, but in line with our expectations. The national average is 6.5%, but that figure includes authorities, like Surrey County Council, that have a statutory duty for social care.

There is a small increase in the government grant of around £150,000. It will be a small help toward funding our remaining budget gap for 2024 to 2025.

The grant is once again a single year settlement with no indication on the future of our funding streams. These normally include the New Homes Bonus, Funding Guarantee, Fair Funding review and Council tax limits. This is unhelpful when trying to plan and deliver council services and finances over the medium term.