

YOUR COUNCIL TAX AND THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Introduction

The Mayor of London's budget for the 2024-25 financial year sets out his priorities, including supporting Londoners through the current cost-of-living crisis. The budget also supports job creation and London's business community, our city's future growth and economic success and the Mayor's work to continue building a safer, fairer and greener London for everyone.

This year's budget will provide resources to improve the key public services Londoners need and help address the cost-of-living crisis. This includes extending the Mayor's universal free school meals programme for all state primary school children for a further academic year until at least July 2025, freezing TfL pay as you go and other non-government regulated fares for the next twelve months and delivering more genuinely affordable homes. The budget also provides resources to support jobs and growth, fund skills and retraining programmes, help rough sleepers off the streets, invest in services for children and young people and make London a fairer and greener place to live. Moreover, it prioritises resources for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Fire Brigade (LFB) to keep Londoners safe, including violence reduction initiatives, support for victims of crime, funding to maintain frontline officer numbers, continued reform of the MPS and the delivery of projects to divert vulnerable young people away from gangs and violence.

In light of the conditions imposed as a result of government funding deals, it has been necessary to provide additional resources through local taxation income, including council tax, to maintain London's transport system and preserve and expand the bus network.

Council tax for GLA services

The Greater London Authority's (GLA) share of the council tax for a typical Band D property has been increased by £37.26 (or 72p per week) to £471.40. The additional income from this increase in council tax will fund the MPS and the LFB, and will also go towards ensuring existing public transport services in London can be maintained, meeting requirements set by the government in funding agreements. Council taxpayers in the City of London, which has its own police force, will pay £166.27.

Band D Council Tax (£)	2023-24	Change	2024-25
MOPAC (Metropolitan Police)	292.13	13.00	305.13
LFC (London Fire Brigade)	62.48	4.26	66.74
GLA	22.44	0.00	22.44
Transport for London	57.09	20.00	77.09
Total	434.14	37.26	471.40

Investing in frontline services

This budget will enable the Mayor to fulfil his key priorities for London. These include:

- ◆ Freezing TfL fares (excluding central government regulated fares such as travelcards) in 2024 with off-peak fares being introduced on Fridays all day for an initial three month trial period between March and May 2024
- ◆ Working with London boroughs to maintain existing concessionary travel and assisted door to door transport schemes. This includes, for example, maintaining free bus and tram travel for under 18s as well as free off-peak travel across the network for older Londoners (supplemented by free travel before 9am on Fridays for those aged 60+ for an initial three month trial period from March to May 2024), the disabled, armed forces personnel in uniform and eligible armed services veterans and protecting the Taxicard and Dial-a-Ride schemes.
- ◆ Providing £140 million to continue to fund universal free school meals for London's estimated 287,000 state primary school children for a second academic year until at least July 2025. This will save families up to £1,000 over two years per child as the cost-of-living crisis continues to hit
- ◆ Ensuring the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has the resources it needs to tackle violent crime by investing an additional £151 million in 2024-25 in policing and crime prevention. This includes investing an extra £6.5 million in London's Violence Reduction Unit to divert young people away from gangs and crime. More generally an additional £189 million is being invested to deliver reform of the MPS, including through the New Met for London programme to increase trust and confidence amongst Londoners in their police service

- ◆ Funding 1,300 additional police officer posts and 500 extra Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) from locally raised council tax and business rates revenues. This budget will see MPS receiving a record £1.143 billion in funding from the GLA
- ◆ Tackling the underlying causes of crime through the rollout of funding to support disadvantaged young Londoners to access positive opportunities and constructive activities that allow them to make the most of their potential, as well as resources for new violence reduction initiatives
- ◆ Protecting vulnerable children and women at risk of abuse and domestic violence
- ◆ Providing resources to rollout a transformation programme so that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) can implement the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and other key improvements. The London Fire Commissioner, with the full support of the Mayor, is also committed to continuing to implement the deep-rooted reform needed to the culture and systems within the LFB
- ◆ Continuing the Hopper bus fare, which makes transport more affordable for millions of Londoners
- ◆ Delivering the Elizabeth line on its full timetable and route. The Elizabeth line has increased central London's rail capacity by ten per cent and is forecast to see upwards of 200 million passenger journeys per annum making it the busiest rail line in the UK. This follows on from the opening of Northern line extension to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station in September 2021
- ◆ Continuing to tackle London's housing crisis, by investing £6.4 billion over the next five years to increase the number of Londoners who have a safe, decent and affordable home as well as allocating resources to tackle homelessness and reduce rough sleeping
- ◆ Tackling the climate emergency following the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) London-wide to tackle air pollution, which has been supported by a £210 million vehicle scrappage scheme for small businesses and Londoners to help them switch to cleaner vehicles or retrofit their existing ones
- ◆ Investing in projects to enable more walking and cycling across London and
- ◆ Funding projects to bring Londoners together, promote arts, sports and culture, help tackle inequality and improve the environment.

Summary of the GLA Group budget

The following tables compare the GLA Group's planned spending for 2024-25 with last year and sets out why it has changed.

The GLA's planned gross expenditure is higher this year. This reflects the additional resources the Mayor is investing in policing, the fire brigade and transport services. Overall, the council tax requirement has increased because of the extra resources for the MPS and the LFB and to secure funding to maintain existing transport services including buses and the tube network. There has been a 1.4 per cent increase in London's residential property taxbase. Find out more about our budget at: www.london.gov.uk/budget.

How the GLA's budget is funded (£ million)	2024-25
Gross expenditure	17,480.4
Government grants and retained business rates	-7,433.2
Fares, charges and other income	-8,130.3
Change in reserves	-426.6
Amount met by council taxpayers	1,490.3

Changes in spending (£ million)	2024-25
2023-24 council tax requirement	1,353.1
Net change in service expenditure and income	485.3
Change in use of reserves	43.7
Government grants and retained business rates	-272.3
Other changes	-119.5
Amount met by council taxpayers (£m)	1,490.3