

# Why not pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit?



## A convenient way to pay your Council Tax

Direct Debit is the method of payment used by over half of the Council taxpayers in Solihull because it provides so many advantages:

### Peace of mind

Peace of mind knowing your Council Tax instalments are being paid automatically on your instalment date and payment dates will not be missed.

### Cheaper

The expense of posting 10 cheques a year is eliminated.

### Convenient

No more journeys to make your payments or standing in queues.

### Quick and easy to set up

To switch to Direct Debit, simply contact us on ☎ 0121 704 8100 and we will set up your Direct Debit over the telephone. All you need is your bank details to hand.



### Data Protection

We may use any information you provide to work out your Council Tax and any entitlement to a discount or Council Tax Benefit. We may pass it on to other organisations to confirm information, to protect public funds and prevent and detect fraud, crime or as required by the law. We may also share it with other Council services and partner organisations to make sure our records are accurate and to help us identify services you may be entitled to or interested in. For more details about how we will use your information, please contact us on ☎ 0121 704 8100.

If you or someone you know needs this booklet in another language, in large print or on audio CD please contact us on ☎ 0121 704 8100.



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Council Tax

## information 2011-2012



SOLINS0001

## Contents

	page
Council Tax – information and ways to reduce your bill	2
Financial information	8
Parish Councils	12
Environment Agency and Transport charges	14
Council results summary 2010-2011	15

## Contact us

### Web:

Information about Council services can be found at:

[www.solihull.gov.uk](http://www.solihull.gov.uk)

### You can get the latest updates at:

[www.twitter.com/SolihullCouncil](http://www.twitter.com/SolihullCouncil) and [www.facebook.com/solihullcouncil](http://www.facebook.com/solihullcouncil)

### Email:

[connectcc@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:connectcc@solihull.gov.uk)

### Call:

0121 704 8000

(environmental enquiries such as refuse, abandoned cars, litter, parks pest control)

0121 704 6000 (general enquiries)

Details of our walk-in centres can be found on page 7 of this booklet.

### Paying the Council Tax

- Council Tax bills sent before the 30th April 2011 are payable in 10 monthly instalments.
- Where we send bills at other times of the year, the number of instalments are reduced proportionately.
- Bills sent after 31st December 2011 are payable in a single instalment.
- Payments can be arranged for the 1st or the 15th of the month. If you would like to change your payment date please contact us.

### Paying on time

- **Unable to pay, don't delay, contact us today. Solihull Connect Customer Contact Centre** Phone: ☎ 0121 704 8100  
E-mail: [council.tax@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@solihull.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.solihull.gov.uk](http://www.solihull.gov.uk)
- You can pay your Council Tax monthly but your payment needs to reach us by your instalment date.
- If you do not pay on time we will send you a reminder notice, giving you **seven days** to bring your payments up to date.
- If you do not pay as explained on the reminder notice, or continue to pay late, **you will lose the right to pay by monthly instalments and you will need to pay the remainder of the year's tax in one instalment.**
- If you lose the right to pay by instalments and payment in full is still not received, you may receive a **summons**, which means you will incur court costs.

### Direct Debit

Why not pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit? It reduces administration costs and means we can spend more on services. It is covered by the Direct Debit Guarantee.

### Direct Debit Guarantee

- This guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that take part in the Direct Debit scheme. The efficiency and security of the scheme is monitored and protected by your own bank or building society.
- If the amounts to be paid by Direct Debit or the payment dates change, we will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by us or your bank or building society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your bank or building society. **Please also send a copy of your letter to us.**

### To change to Direct Debit

Simply contact us on ☎ 0121 704 8100 and we can take your Direct Debit details over the telephone. All you need is your bank details to hand.

### To pay using your debit card

Phone: ☎ 0121 704 0869 for our 24 hour automated telephone service.

Website:

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/epay> to pay on our secure internet payment facility.

## Exempt properties

There is nothing to pay for a period of time where a property falls into one of the following categories:

**Class A** An unoccupied and unfurnished property that needs structural or major repair work for a period of less than twelve months

**Class B** A property owned by a charity that is unoccupied for less than six months

**Class C** A property that is unoccupied and unfurnished for less than six months

**Class D** A property left unoccupied by a prisoner

**Class E** A property left unoccupied by a permanent resident in a hospital or care home

**Class F** A property left unoccupied because the former occupier has died

**Class G** A property where occupation is prohibited by law

**Class H** An unoccupied property awaiting occupation by a minister of religion

**Class I** A property left unoccupied by a person who lives elsewhere to receive personal care

**Class J** A property left unoccupied by a person who lives elsewhere to provide personal care

**Class K** A property left unoccupied by a student who lives elsewhere to be near his/her place of education

**Class L** A repossessed property

**Class M** Students' halls of residence

**Class N** A property only occupied by students

**Class O** Properties used by the armed forces

**Class P** Properties occupied by visiting forces

**Class Q** A property left unoccupied by a bankrupt individual

**Class R** A vacant caravan pitch or boat mooring

**Class S** Properties occupied only by people under 18 years of age

**Class T** Unoccupied annexes

**Class U** Properties occupied only by people who are severely mentally impaired

**Class V** Properties occupied by diplomats or members of certain international organisations

**Class W** Self contained annexes and "granny flats" occupied by elderly or disabled relatives

Where a property exemption has been granted we will show the appropriate class on your bill.

**Please note you should not withhold payment of Council Tax whilst we are processing your application for an exemption.**

You can get further information about exemptions from:

Phone: Solihull Connect Customer Contact Centre  
☎ 0121 704 8100

E-mail: [council.tax@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@solihull.gov.uk)

Website: [www.solihull.gov.uk](http://www.solihull.gov.uk)

## Discounts

You may be entitled to a discount of 25% if you are the only person, aged 18 or over, living in your property.

You may also be entitled to a discount of 25% if all but one of the adults living in your property are not counted.

The following people are not counted:

- People detained in prison or hospital by a court order
- People with severe mental impairment
- People who are resident in certain hostels
- Students or a student's non-British spouse or dependants
- Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and youth trainees
- Long term patients in hospitals or care homes
- Certain care workers and carers
- People who are entitled to child benefit or 18 and 19 year olds who leave school or college between 30 April and 1 November
- Members of certain religious communities
- Members of visiting forces and their families
- Members of international headquarters and defence organisations and their families.

You can apply for a 50% discount if all the adults are not counted.

If there are no adults living in your property but your property is furnished you may be entitled to a 10% reduction.

In specific circumstances more discount categories may be defined by the Council.

## Reductions for people with disabilities

You may be able to claim a reduction if you (or someone who lives with you) are disabled and your property has one or more of the following features to meet the needs of the disabled person:

- A room is needed for a special purpose, e.g. a room used for dialysis treatment or a downstairs room converted to a bedroom
- Or there is an additional kitchen or bathroom
- Or the disabled person needs to use a wheelchair indoors and there is sufficient floor space for them to do so.

The reduction is the same as moving down one band. In the case of a band A property, the reduction is one ninth of the charge for a property in band D.

**Please note you should not withhold payment of Council Tax while we are processing your application for a discount.**

You can get further information regarding discounts and reductions from:

Phone: Solihull Connect Customer Contact Centre  
☎ 0121 704 8100

E-mail: [council.tax@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@solihull.gov.uk)

Website: [www.solihull.gov.uk](http://www.solihull.gov.uk)

## Council Tax Benefit

**Council Tax Benefit is money off your bill.** If you are liable to pay Council Tax you may be able to claim Council Tax Benefit if:

- You live on a low income and
- You and your partner have savings of less than £16,000 (unless you are entitled to the Guaranteed Credit component of Pension Credit).

The amount of Council Tax Benefit you receive is also dependent on the personal circumstances of you and your partner and all other members of your household.

## Second Adult Rebate

Second Adult Rebate is help if you share your home with one adult or more. You can qualify for a rebate of up to 25% off your Council Tax bill. The person who shares your home must not be your partner. Your income is not taken into account.

You may be able to apply for Second Adult Rebate if the person who shares your home is:

- Aged 18 or over and **not** your partner
- Not paying you rent
- Not paying Council Tax themselves
- On a gross income of less than £387 per week, from April 2011 (if you share your home with more

than one person we will use their combined gross income).

**Please note you should not withhold payment of Council Tax while we are processing your Council Tax Benefit application.**

## Changes in circumstances

You are required to notify us immediately of a change in your circumstances. For example:

- **If you or your partner move house**
- **If you or your partner stop, or start getting income support, state benefits or any other income**
- **Changes in income or savings of all members of your household**
- **Changes in the amount of rent that you pay.**

**If you are aged 60 or over and you receive Pension Credit, the majority of changes must be reported directly to the Pension Service.**

**If in doubt about what changes need to be reported or if you require further information please contact us.**

## Council Tax Benefit Enquiries

Phone: ☎ 0121 704 8200

E-mail: [benefits@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@solihull.gov.uk)

Website: [www.solihull.gov.uk](http://www.solihull.gov.uk)

## Property Bands

All properties in the Borough have been valued by the Valuation Office Agency and placed into one of the eight bands shown below. The property value is based on market values on **1st April 1991**. Your Band is shown on the front of your bill.

Band	Range of Values
A	Up to £40,000
B	£40,001 - £52,000
C	£52,001 - £68,000
D	£68,001 - £88,000
E	£88,001 - £120,000
F	£120,001 - £160,000
G	£160,001 - £320,000
H	More than £320,000

## Appeals against banding

You can appeal against the banding of your property if:

- Your property has recently been built
- You have occupied your property within the last six months
- Part or all of your property has been demolished or used for non domestic purposes

Further information can be obtained from:

**Birmingham Valuation Office,  
Regent Court,  
14-17 George Road,  
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1NU  
Phone: ☎ 0121 410 3700  
Fax: 0121 410 3799**

You can get more details by visiting: [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk)

**Please note that you can not withhold payment of Council Tax whilst your appeal is being considered. If your appeal is successful, any overpayment made will be credited to your account or refunded to you.**

## Liability and appeals

You should advise us if a bill has been sent to the wrong person or your bill is incorrect. We will look into the matter for you. If you are not satisfied with the decision, you may appeal in writing, telling us why you are appealing. Please write to:

**Income and Awards,  
P O Box 1761, Council House,  
Solihull, West Midlands, B91 9RR**

If you remain dissatisfied you may make a further appeal to:  
**The Valuation Tribunal (Stafford),  
The Hollies, Newport Road,  
Stafford, ST16 1ET  
Phone: ☎ 01785 254321**

## Write:

For Council Tax enquiries write to us at:  
**Income and Awards  
P O Box 1761, Council House,  
Solihull, West Midlands B91 9RR**

## Phone:

You can call the following enquiry lines:  
• **Council Tax** ☎ 0121 704 8100  
• **Council Tax Benefits**  
☎ 0121 704 8200

## Useful Contacts ☎

Age UK	0121 705 9128
Benefit Fraud Hotline	0800 328 6340
Citizens Advice Bureau	0844 826 9716
Chelmsley Advice & Resource Agency	0121 770 3773
Job Centre Plus Phone Service	0845 60 60 234
Land Registry - Customer Services	0844 892 1111
Magistrates Court	0121 705 8101
National Debtline	0808 808 4000
Revenues & Customs Taxes helpline	0845 302 1437
Severn Trent Bill Enquiries - Domestic	08457 500 500
Tax Credit Helpline	0845 300 3900

## Visit:

You can pay your bill and get information on Council services at:

- **Solihull Connect, Library Square, Solihull**  
 Monday 8:30am-5:30pm  
 Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am-5:30pm  
 Wednesday 10am-5:30pm  
 Saturday 9am-1pm
- **Solihull Connect, Bluebell Centre, West Mall, Chelmsley Wood**  
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am-5:30pm;  
 Wednesday 10am-5:30pm  
 Saturday 9am-1pm  
 A payment machine is available for making **cash** only payments at this office. Card payments can be made by visiting a Customer Service Advisor.
- **Solihull Connect, Shirley Police Station, 285 Stratford Road, Shirley**  
 Monday-Friday 9am-6pm,  
 Saturday 9am-1pm  
 Card payments only can be made by visiting a Customer Service Advisor.
- **Chelmsley Wood Area Office 6/8 Coppice Way, Chelmsley Wood**  
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9am-4:30pm  
 Wednesday 10am-4:30pm  
 Friday 9am-4pm
- **Kingshurst Area Office Church Close, Kingshurst Enquiries only**  
 Monday, Tuesday 9am-4pm  
 Wednesday 10am-3pm  
 Thursday 10am-3pm, Friday 10am-4pm

### E-mail:

You can e-mail us on:

- **Council Tax**  
[council.tax@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@solihull.gov.uk)
- **Council Tax Benefits**  
[benefits@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@solihull.gov.uk)

Our budget requirement affects the level of Council Tax that is set, as shown below:

2010-2011		2011-2012
£ million		£ million
161.3	Estimate of total spending	160.0
-11.7	less Police and Fire precepts	-11.7
-1.4	less reserves	-0.1
1.3	plus Parish precepts	1.3
<b>149.5</b>	<b>Our Budget Requirement</b>	<b>149.5</b>

### Analysis of our Budget Requirement:

2010-2011 Budget Requirement  
 plus additional spending needs  
 less efficiency savings  
 less Council Tax freeze grant

### 2011-2012 Budget Requirement

### £ million

149.5  
 17.5  
 -15.2  
 -2.3  
**149.5**

Our budget requirement (excluding Parish precepts) is divided by our Council Tax base (79,806) to give us the band D Council Tax.

### Council Tax – comparison between years:

The Council Tax (including Police and Fire precepts) for a band D property in 2010-2011 for a non-parish area was

Increase due to additional spending needs net of achieved savings

Increases in amounts for Police and Fire precepts (which we collect on their behalf)

- Police
- Fire

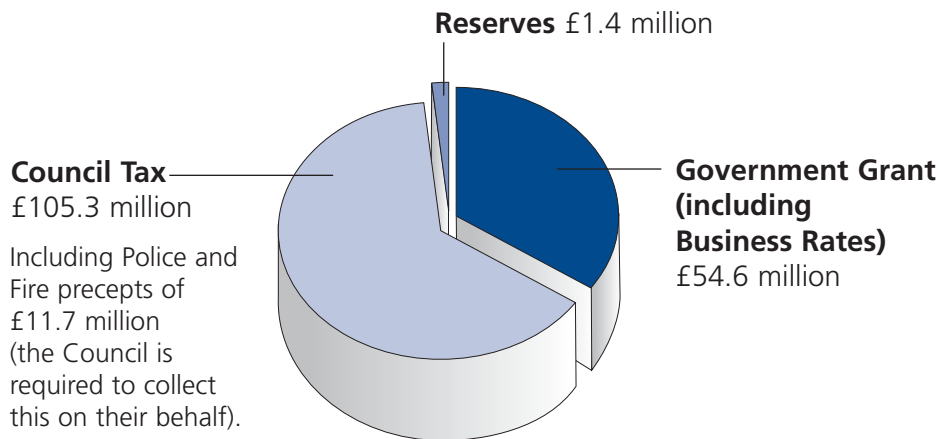
The Council Tax (including Police and Fire precepts) for a band D property in 2011-2012 for a non-parish area is

£1,321.00  
 £0  
 £0  
 £0  
**£1,321.00**

Where the money comes from

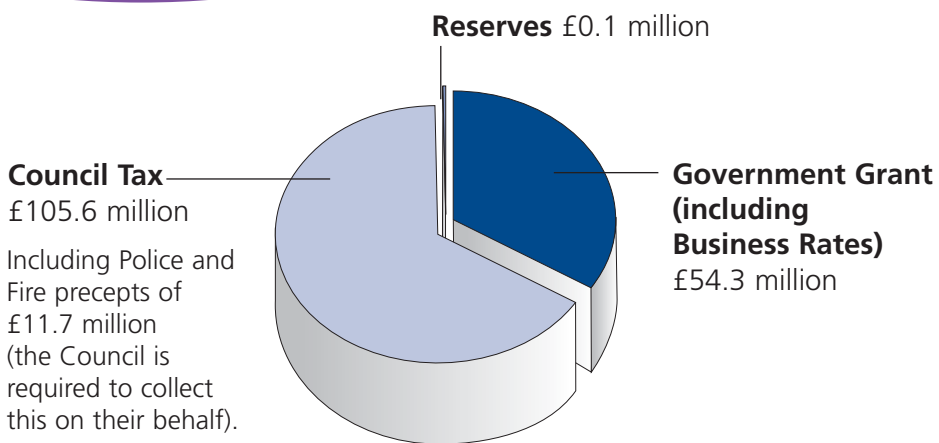
**2010-2011**

Total income £161.3 million



**2011-2012**

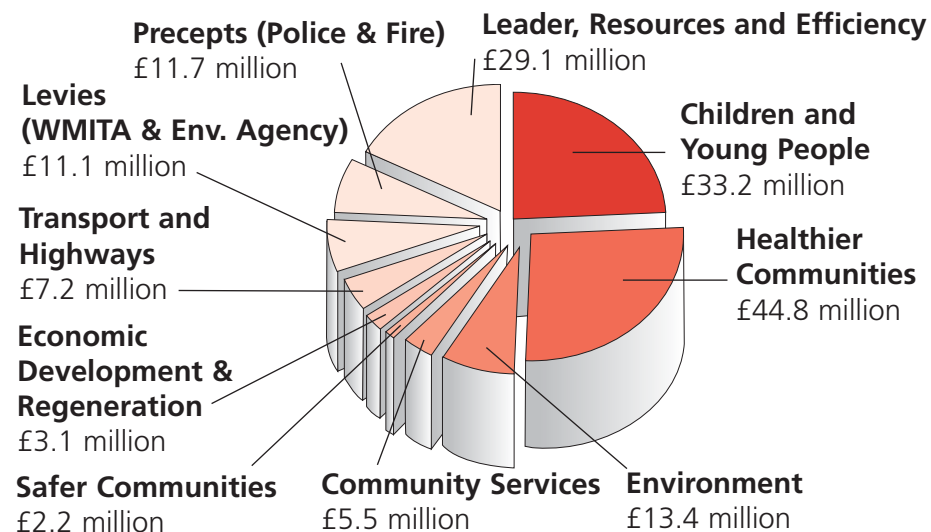
Total income £160.0 million



How the money is spent

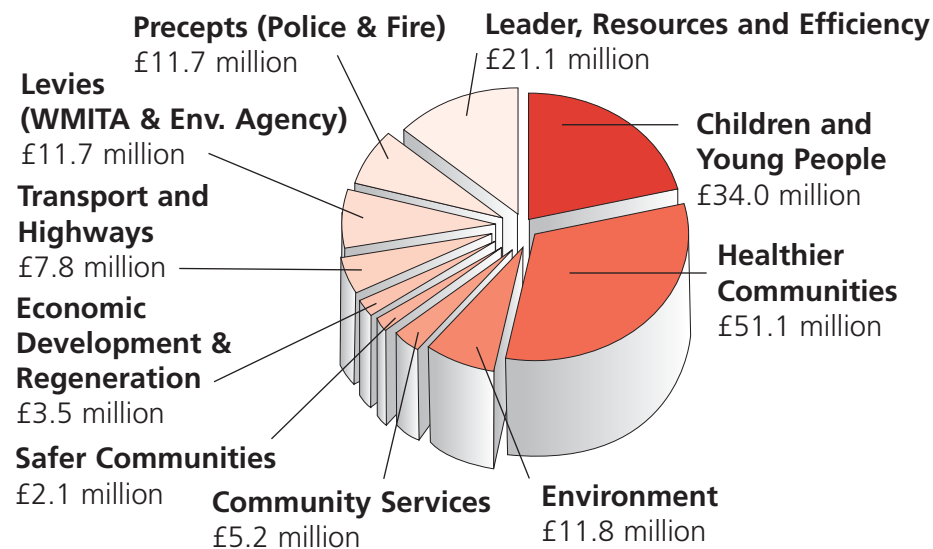
**2010-2011**

Estimate of total spending £161.3 million



**2011-2012**

Estimate of total spending £160.0 million



## How many staff we employ

As at January 2011, we employ the following full time equivalents:

	Jan 2010	Jan 2011
Core Council	1,987	1,981
Solihull schools	3,288	2,919
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>5,275</b>	<b>4,900</b>

Figures now exclude any casual staff employed in the year.

Figures exclude schools that have become Academies.

## Borrowing

Our borrowing on 31 January 2011 was £147 million.

£11 million of this relates to former West Midlands County Council debt.

## Capital spending

As well as spending on day-to-day services, we also provide new assets (e.g. buildings) and replace and improve existing assets. This is known as capital spending.

For 2011-2012 we plan to spend £26.6 million.

## To find out more

Information about how we spend your money can be found on page 10. If you would like more information please write to us at:

Financial Operations Division, Solihull Council, P O Box 9, Council House, Solihull, B91 9QR

Email: [ctaxbooklet@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:ctaxbooklet@solihull.gov.uk)

As a billing authority we have to collect the Parish precept amounts on behalf of the Parish Councils. Each Parish Council is responsible for setting their own precept charge. Details of the charges for each Parish Council are shown below:

	2010-2011		2011-2012	
	Charge	Amount for each property in band D	Charge	Amount for each property in band D
Balsall	£95,081	£31.55	£95,430	£31.45
Barston	£3,410	£12.68	£3,410	£12.58
Berkswell	£42,000	£27.04	£37,200	£23.94
Bickenhill	£122,808	£49.12	£126,123	£50.19
Castle Bromwich	£219,288	£53.20	£219,288	£53.07
Chelmsley Wood	£250,000	£69.74	£252,320	£69.74
Cheswick Green	£45,000	£46.63	£45,000	£46.88
Dickens Heath	£80,000	£44.37	£80,000	£42.22
Fordbridge	£125,000	£52.54	£125,000	£52.50
Hampton-in-Arden	£22,150	£23.84	£24,300	£26.16
Hockley Heath	£75,000	£94.22	£48,970	£61.44
Kingshurst	£46,700	£20.25	£37,000	£16.17
Meriden	£32,736	£27.05	£40,000	£33.11
Smith's Wood	£122,910	£45.37	£120,000	£43.53
Tidbury Green	£15,000	£31.91	£15,000	£31.58

## Details of Parish charges over £140,000

## Castle Bromwich

	2010-2011	2011-2012
Arden Hall	£195,251	£202,830
Finance and administration	£89,873	£94,669
Open spaces	£90,166	£89,861
Contingency	£25,000	£25,000
Less use of reserves	-£39,852	-£48,958
Less income	-£141,150	-£144,114
Precept charge	£219,288	£219,288

## Chelmsley Wood

	2010-2011	2011-2012
Organised events and community activities	£25,250	£24,500
Trading activities	£119,000	£132,000
Finance and administration	£112,750	£95,000
Open spaces	£23,500	£30,500
Buildings	£74,000	£87,000
Less income	-£104,500	-£116,680
Precept charge	£250,000	£252,320

The Environment Agency will charge us £81,818 (2010-2011 = £82,044) for providing flood defence functions in 2011-2012.

## Details for the Environment Agency's Midland region are:

	2010-2011	2011-2012
Spending before deductions	£63,822,000	£51,066,000
Spending after deductions	£5,825,000	£4,931,000
Charges necessary for the whole of the Midland region	£3,000,000	£3,000,000
Total Council Tax base	2,907,617	2,926,237
Council Tax base for Solihull	79,518	79,806

## Changes in charges from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012 caused by:

Inflation (including economies and efficiency savings)	£555,000
Changes in quality or quantity of service and funding capital from revenue	-£13,311,000
Differences in income received or expected by way of grants, fees and charges (this includes contributions from Internal Drainage Boards and Government grants)	£11,862,000
Changes in net expenditure	-£894,000
Transfers to/(from) balances	£894,000
Changes in levy requirements	£0

## Transport Charge

The 2011-2012 budget must include the following amount:

	2010-2011	2011-2012
West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority charge (WMITA)	£11,041,535	£11,663,486

We are one of the public bodies that provide you with local services. We work with our partners towards delivering the following shared vision for Solihull.

***Solihull in 2018: Where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous***

The Council works with the Solihull Partnership to bring together representatives from the community, voluntary, private and public sector to ensure a more co-ordinated way of providing services to local people. For more information about the Partnership go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership)

We have a number of priorities set out in our Council Plan which outline the customer outcomes we strive to deliver (for more information go to [www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/councilpriorities.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/democracy/councilpriorities.htm)). Here are some of our main achievements from the last year, many of which have been delivered in partnership.

## Customer Outcome 1

### Building Healthier Communities

**We want to improve the health and quality of life of local people, helping them to remain independent and live longer.**

- The 'You+' shop celebrated its first anniversary in August 2010. Based in Chelmsley Wood it is a one stop shop for health and advice, providing access to services which improve health and well being (e.g. Stop smoking clinics, Alcohol misuse support) and information and advice on health and social services (e.g. older people and carers). Achievements in the first year include a 30% increase in the number of people taking part in Stop Smoking Clinics and just under 1,000 people using the Health Checks and Sexual Health Advice services.
- In July 2010 we launched a 'One Front Door' phone number, for advice, information and access to Adult Social Services. The new number '0121 704 8007' is for anyone who is not in current contact with Adult Social Services and will provide general information, including services provided by partner organisations, as well as referrals and access into social care services. For more information go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/health/contactusss.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/health/contactusss.htm)

- In April 2010 'Solihull Independent Living' (SIL) was established. This is a not-for profit organisation based on a partnership between Solihull Community Housing, Solihull Council and Solihull Care Trust that offers people who are older, disabled or on a low income an affordable way to repair, improve or adapt their homes. It also aims to help people carry on living comfortably at home and stay independent rather than moving into residential care. For more information go to:

[www.solihull.gov.uk/housing/disabledfacilitiesgrant.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/housing/disabledfacilitiesgrant.htm)

## Customer Outcome 2

### Building Safer Communities

**We are committed to reducing crime and ensuring residents' personal safety as this is one of the greatest concerns for our communities.**

- Levels of crime continue to reduce, with a 15% reduction in serious acquisitive crime (which includes burglary, robbery and vehicle crime) and a 6.5% reduction in serious violent crime. Through the Safer Solihull Partnership we have also redesigned our processes to improve our response to anti-social behaviour. For more information about the work of the Safer Solihull Partnership go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/safersolihull/](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/safersolihull/)
- Through the Road Safety Partnership we have established several Initiatives to increase safety on our roads, which have included training and equipment for a further six 'Community Speed Watch' schemes. These enable local residents to get involved in helping to cut down the numbers of motorists who exceed speed limits. We also helped to deliver road safety educational programmes in all secondary schools in Solihull. Serious road casualty figures for Solihull for 2010 were at their lowest ever level of 59, which is a 75% reduction from their peak. For further information go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety.htm)

## Customer Outcome 3

### Building Stronger Communities

**Strong and happy communities have pride in where they live; are confident, welcoming and resilient, enabling them to respond positively to the challenges they face.**

- In the first nine months of 2010-11, just under half (46.6%) of household waste was sent for recycling or composting, an increase from 42.7% in the same period the previous year. Only 11.5% of waste was landfilled, again an improvement from 13.7% in the same period the previous year. For more information about waste and recycling services in Solihull, visit: [www.solihull.gov.uk/environment/refuse.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/environment/refuse.htm)

- In 2010 Solihull was awarded seven Green Flags for our parks. Awarded by Keep Britain Tidy, the Green Flags are seen as the gold standard for public spaces that are welcoming, safe and well maintained. It is also seen as a way of encouraging others to achieve high environmental standards. For more information on Solihull's parks and open spaces go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/parksandopenspaces.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/parksandopenspaces.htm)
- We have set up a Community Involvement Network to improve the quality and co-ordination of community activities in Solihull. As part of this we have supported some resident led partnerships in Smiths Wood and Fordbridge to tackle the issues that matter most to local people. In addition four partnership forums have been established across different parts of the Borough to enable local people and organisations to get involved in and influence the work of the Solihull Partnership.

## Customer Outcome 4

### Building Prosperous Communities

**Future prosperity within Solihull is dependent on creating productive and competitive businesses operating in a sustainable environment to provide local jobs, whilst developing the skills of local people.**

- A new e-portal, Solihull for Success, was launched on the internet in April 2010. It provides a one stop shop for local business support, with features including online property search facilities. By December 2010 this service had already led to a 64% increase in property enquiries - which will help to generate new investment in Solihull - and has attracted international visitors to the site, including from the United States, India, Germany and France. For more information go to: [www.solihullforsuccess.com](http://www.solihullforsuccess.com)
- Work continued during 2010-11 to deliver the Future Jobs Fund with 120 jobs started and Deprived Area Funding being used to develop training opportunities for Future Jobs Fund employees. The Future Jobs Fund was a nationwide initiative about creating jobs for young, unemployed people and those who face significant barriers to enter the labour market.

## Customer Outcome 5

### A Brighter Future for our Children and Young People

**We want to give our children and young people the best possible start in life and keep them safe from harm.**

- Pupils' performance in GCSEs continues to improve. Provisional 2010 results show 80.7% of pupils gained A\* to C passes – an increase of 4.3% compared to last year and above the national average of 69.1%.
- In October 2010 Solihull's Family Intervention Programme won an award at the Health and Social Care Awards. This was in recognition of their multi-agency teamwork and commitment to working with families. The service run jointly by Solihull Council and Solihull Care Trust works with families when a young person is at risk or has been involved in crime or anti-social behaviour. Since the programme started in 2009, 17 families have been supported to improve their lives. The number of offences and anti-social behaviour with the families has reduced and the parents are now more confident in managing their family's behaviour.
- In 2009-10 ten play areas were redeveloped in Solihull as part of the national Playbuilder programme to revamp a number of play areas. A further seven play spaces are expected to be completed by the end of March 2011, meaning that by the end of the three year programme, 23 play spaces will have been improved across the whole Borough of Solihull. For more information go to: [www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/playfacilities.htm](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/parks/playfacilities.htm)

## Customer Outcome 6

### Good Value Services

**Providing Good Value applies to everything we do. We are committed to providing high quality services at a reasonable cost.**

- As we receive the lowest government grant per head of population of all metropolitan authorities, our medium term financial strategy is based on identifying substantial savings to continue to fund local priorities and protect front line services wherever possible in the light of national spending cuts. In 2010-11 we identified over £12m of savings, and the focus of the 2011-12 budget process has been on identifying significant savings whilst striving to protect front line services.