

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

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SELF-SUFFICIENCY INCREASES PACE OF MODERNISATION

Bexley's latest response to the unprecedented change in the way local government is funded is an ambitious programme of modernisation and a more commercial approach to investment.

Bexley will need to be self-sufficient financially by 2020 – which means it will have to meet the full cost of all local services without any government grant. All its income will come from Council Tax, Business rates, fees, New Homes Bonus and other funding.

The Council will have to find a further £25m of savings by 2020, although the economic situation means that there is considerable uncertainty about this figure. It is likely that there will be a further tightening of public finances and more spending reductions.

The good news is that Bexley has a good track record of delivering savings and a programme in place to ensure all of its services become more efficient and provide better value for money.

Work is well underway on new approaches to providing services that will deliver better results for local people, more efficiently and at lower cost.

“Being self-sufficient is something all working families understand,” said Cllr Teresa O’Neill OBE, Leader of the Council. “We can only spend the money we have and that is much less than in the past.

“This is an opportunity to do things in a new and better way, to ensure we focus on those things that really matter and where we can have most impact.”

Priorities that the Council has been focusing on include projects to -

- Keep more young people safe without taking them into care
- Provide more local support for vulnerable young people with high needs
- Help older people to remain independent and living in their own homes for longer
- Make the case for large-scale investment in strategic transport links
- Manage economic growth for the benefit of local people
- Improve the Council's website and other online services
- Reduce the cost of waste disposal, partly through building on Bexley's record as London's number 1 borough for recycling.

The Council is also looking to invest in the borough as a place to live and work, to encourage growth, which will generate extra income to pay for local services.

In the autumn the Council will set out its spending plans for the next three years, which will involve a combination of increased income and spending reductions. It will offer local people the chance to have their say on those that involve changes to the services they use.

'ENDS'

Please contact: John Ferry on 020 3045 4867
john.ferry@bexley.gov.uk

Attachments

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