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**Bournemouth Council braces itself for further £22million cut in funds**

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BOURNEMOUTH council is bracing itself for a further £22million loss in central government funding.

Borough leader Cllr John Beesley will tell his colleagues at this month’s full council that the local government settlement was “as poor as expected”.

In a statement released as part of the council’s corporate plan prior to Tuesday's meeting, he said £41million has so far been removed from the authority’s income since 2010 - a total loss of 50 per cent.

Cllr Beesley said this was "far, far more" than the projection of 28 per cent originally set out in the last coalition government’s comprehensive spending review.

In addition, the effects of cost shunting continue to exert pressures on the council’s finances, especially in the area of health funding.

The 2016/17 budget makes substantial provision, yet again, for the most vulnerable in our community. A further £4.4million will be allocated to Adults’ and Children’s Social Care in 2016/17.”

“This means that approximately 74 per cent of the council’s entire budget next year will be used to meet the cost of statutory, demand-led services for adults and children, of which most is for social care alone.

These are very necessary, but costly services which the council must provide in the absence of any national funding solutions to the increasing demands of the adult social care challenges we face nationally and, in particular, here in Bournemouth.”

Cllr Beesley also defended the 3.99 per cent increase in council tax.

“Our ambition to maintain key service delivery means for the first time in six years we had to introduce an increase,” he said.

We recognised very early a £14million gap in the base budget to balance the books for 2016/17.

We have identified savings of over £12million and this, coupled with the Adult Social Care precept, has enabled us to meet our targets.

This means that by the end of 2016/17 we will have achieved cumulative savings of £291million since 2007, towards our target of £326million by 2020.”