

Every home pays £500 to fund council pensions

COUNCIL tax payers are forking out about £500 a year for town hall workers' pensions after the cost of their retirement schemes rocketed 27 per cent in a year.

Local authorities had to contribute £9.5 billion in the last financial year towards pensions for two million staff. In 2016-17, the contribution was £7.4 billion.

This means almost a third of all money raised in council tax goes towards pen-

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sions, equivalent to £500 for an average Band D taxpayer. Council workers typically enjoy gold-plated pensions. The leap in costs comes as council chiefs demand the Government gives them billions more.

Michael Johnson, of the Centre for Policy Studies think-tank, said: 'This is unsustain-

able. The cost manifests itself in a reduction in council services but councils have not been upfront or transparent on this.'

A spokesman for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government said: 'Employer pension contributions are set every three years by independent experts. We know some councils have made larger payments up front and it is likely their contributions will fall next year.'