

PRECEPT FOR 2019/20: CONSIDERATIONS

The current precept (council tax) raised from all our residents is £108250 (including rate support grant), which was an increase of 10% from last year; however, for 2019/20, please take into account the following:

Rate Support Grant: We have received £1,700 in Rate Support Grant for 2018/19 and we will not receive anything in 2019/20 due to central government cutbacks.

Administration: The budget for this covers a lot of things including training, expenses, utilities, council tax, volunteer donations, expenses, office costs and supplies, printing costs, and marketing. I have kept the budget similar the amount spent from Nov17 to Oct 18, but split it across Admin and Office Utilities. Additionally I will report Office Supplies under Office Equipment and Supplies next year.

Littleton large car park and overflow car park: We should have paid off the full loan in 2018/19 so funding does not need to be reserved for this anymore.

Clerk's salary: The Clerk's current salary is £10,983.00 plus pension of £549.15 and an incremental rise is an option for the Council if they agree that she has performed satisfactorily. Note that 10% of the clerk's salary is paid by the sports club, under our agreed cost arrangements with them within the £10,000 shown above)

Therefore salary is still to be determined and at the moment the value in this budget item is not correct.

Cleaner's salary: The cleaner has not had a rise in a considerable time and been performing well, he currently earns £9 per hour which equates to £2340 per year. I would propose to improve this to either £9.50 per hour which would increase his salary by £130, or to £10.00 which would increase his salary by £260. Note: £10 per hour matches the hourly rate for Millennium Hall cleaners.

Flood Mitigation Works: Money was set aside for flood mitigations works from CIL in 2017/18, I am proposed to further add to the current reserve of £24,572.82 by setting aside £5,000 from this year's budget.

Election Costs: I understand that all the councillor positions will be up for election this year, and I am presuming this will be similar to 2015/16 when the election was administered by WCC who charged £1000. I am proposing to reserve £1,500 this year.

Grounds maintenance contract costs: Although we have a fixed price for another one and a half years of £9,440 ex VAT, there are plans to review the contract and add other regular ground maintenance work to it. At this time we might consider some extra cuts to the grass as has been mentioned by the football clubs, additionally it has been noted that the contract allows for less cuts than other recreation grounds. Note that the grounds maintenance costs associated with the sports club as well as sports club membership levies and pavilion running costs are recouped from the sports club fees, approximately £10,000 per annum.

Harestock Road Field Rent & Legal Fees: I would propose to pursue the rental of Harestock Road Field again as the lease is out of date, I have reserved some money for legal fees and the rent based on the last known values. Note: We currently receive a portion of the rental from the Sports Club.

Maintenance/care/replacement of playground equipment: There has been a suggestion that some new equipment should be added to Littleton playground for teenagers on the lines of a basketball/netball area. Additionally we need to be aware of the need to replace items of equipment as they wear out, as well as maintain what we have, so I am suggesting keeping the same overall budget of £29,000 as last year.

So, if we are to maintain our buildings, grounds and playgrounds, I would suggest that we will need to consider increasing the precept, but by how much?

The current precept is £106551, if you take off the rate support grant of £1,700.

2.5% raises an extra £2,663

5% raises an extra £5,327

10% raises an extra £10,651

Average amount on Band D property, currently £72.43, as a result would be =

2.5% = £1.65 extra becoming £74.24

5% = £3.30 extra becoming £76.05

10% = £6.60 extra becoming £79.67

If we recommend a 2.5% increase this, together with the anticipated income from the Sports Club of £10,000, this will give us an overall budget of £119,214 for 2019/20 to cover all expected costs and maintain our reserves as required by law. A suggested budget of this amount, broken down by line item, is on a separate spreadsheet for you to view and consider.