

REPORT TO: Town Council – 20th December 2021
REPORT ON: Council Budget and Precept – 2022-23
REPORT BY: Responsible Finance Officer
REPORT DATE: 17th December 2021

BACKGROUND

Each Committee has reviewed their services, ambitions, operational needs and duties to support the community for 2022/23 and beyond, with the Finance and Policy Committee having reviewed and considered each of the budgets put forward by each committee.

The Finance and Policy Committee makes the following recommendations based on a review of each budget line, identifying the major increases and reductions that influence the final precept proposal:

BUDGET ANALYSIS

Income

The allotments, retail radio scheme and Welton Road Cemetery are the only income generating services provided by the Council.

The budget for the CCTV contribution has increased by £1k, although many retailers faced challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic, the number of retailers subscribed to the business together retail scheme has returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The price per pole for allotments has increased for 2022/23, the overall impact is a minimal increase in the income for this facility.

Due to there being no increases to the burial fees for Welton Road Cemetery the budgeted income remains the same.

A contribution of £30K from Northampton County Council provides for the cyclic highway maintenance, which forms part of the responsibilities within the environmental and landscaping services.

It is anticipated that the circus will request to use land currently under the management and maintenance of the council in which will provide income of £1.2K.

Expenditure

Finance & Policy

The Finance and Policy Committee are proposing:

- an increase of £58K for the management and maintenance of the environmental and landscaping services, which include Welton Road Cemetery and the Holy Cross Churchyard.
- the inclusion of a new budget for the sum of £10K for play equipment.
- the inclusion of a new budget for the sum of £20K for the appointment of a consultant to assist the council in conducting a review of the open spaces to inform a forward plan for the needs of the community.
- an increase of £4K for the management and maintenance of public realm/street furniture, to include the refurbish of the notice board at the new street park entrance.

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- the decrease of £2K for the management and maintenance of street lighting following an independent inspection.
- an increase of £1K for Market, due to an anticipated increase in electricity costs.
- an overall increase in wages and salaries by £43.4k (12%), as approved by Council on 29th November 2021, this is to enable an increase in staff hours and to meet the anticipated increases in the council's annual and National Joint Council pay review.
- a decrease of £1K for the provision of protective clothing and equipment for staff members.
- the removal of £10K for the Local Government Reorganization budget, following the transfer and devolution of the open spaces in June 2020 from Daventry District Council to Daventry Town Council, this budget is no longer required.
- an increase of £1K for subscriptions, due to an anticipated increase in annual charges.
- the transfer of £1K budget for advertising and promotions from the finance and policy committee to the community services committee.
- an increase of £2K for the council's insurance for 2022/2023.
- an increase of £5K for Grants & Donations to enable to council to award grants to support community events for 2022/2023.
- the inclusion of £4k for Town Council Elections, for anticipated expenditure of elections which are scheduled to take place in May 2025.
- a decrease in the Civic Expense budget of £1.5K, as the mayor's transport budget has not been utilised in recent years.
- an increase within the premises budget of £15K, for additional cleaning requirements due to covid and anticipated expenditure for building repairs that will be required for 2022/2023.

Community Services

Finance and Policy Committee have reviewed and recommend the following proposals from the Community Services Committee:

- the additional budget line of £3K for advertising and promotion of Daventry Town, this includes £1K which was previously included in the general administration budget.
- an increase of £2K to the Community Transport Budget to provide adequate funding for the provision of a community transport service one day per week for 2022/2023.
- an increase of £18.5K to the events budget. The Committee proposed the inclusion of £18K for the fireworks (which was not included in the 2021/2022 budget as the November 2021 fireworks were funded using un-spent monies for events that were cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions). It is proposed as the Council holds sufficient equipment for the council led community litter picks for 2022/2023 the Litter

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Campaign be decreased by £2K. The Committee propose a reduction in the specialist market budget by £2K, which will provide sufficient funds for the council to provide three themed markets for 2022. The Committee propose the inclusion of 4.5K for the introduction of a summer activities programme for 2022.

- a decrease of £1K to the Town Enhancements budget, which includes the reduction in costs for the supply of the town flowers.
- a decrease of £2K for Allotments, due to reduction in anticipated costs for repairs and maintenance.

Museum Committee

Finance and Policy Committee have reviewed and recommend the following proposals from the Museum Committee:

- an increase of £0.7K to account for increased costs to manage and maintain the museums events and exhibitions which includes the virtual element of engaging with the community.

Planning & Development

Finance and Policy Committee have reviewed and recommend the following proposals from the Planning & Development Committee:

- that a £0 budget should be maintained for 2022/23, as monies have been earmarked for to provide for the appointment of professional advice as required.

Earmarked Reserves

Finance and Policy Committee have reviewed the proposals from all committees in relation to earmarking funds for future projects. Please refer to appendix A for a full report.

CONCLUSION

On reviewing the budget proposals submitted by each Committee and having due regard to the Council's duties and the needs of the community the Finance and Policy Committee recommends the Council budget of £1,613,503 and a precept of £1,467,404 be approved, based on the tax base* and precept for 2021/22 this will be an increase of £18.58 on a band D property (12.33%).

**The council tax base figure reflects the actual amounts paid by residents and takes account of those who are eligible for discounts via local support schemes. The tax base figure is calculated by the principal authority (West Northamptonshire Council) and is expressed in terms of Band D properties.*