

**Report to a Meeting of  
Tetbury Town Council  
to be held at 7.00pm on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

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**BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2019/20**

1. Purpose of Report

To consider approving a Precept for 2019/20, noting the delay in producing a Budget due to the need to spend time concluding some major and high value projects for the coming year.

2. Recommendations of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) **That, in view of the number of high value / major projects still in need of formal decision for inclusion in the Budget, the Council sets a Precept figure for 2019/20 on 28<sup>th</sup> January based on a percentage increase at Band D Council Tax, with the detailed Budget to be determined in February/March for final approval no later than the meeting of the Council to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019;**
- (ii) **that, subject to approval of (i) above, the Council set a Precept of £354,250 (i.e. an increase of 2.9% for the Band D Householder); and**
- (iii) **The Public Budget Consultation Meeting intended to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 be re-scheduled when a draft Budget has been prepared.**

3. Background

- 3.1 On 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 the Finance and Scrutiny Committee considered progress with the Council's Budget for 2019/20 and noted with some concern the delay to concluding even 'in principle' decisions on a number of high value / major projects that impact on the Budget.
- 3.2 The Committee was conscious that, each year, Parish and Town Councils are required to notify the District Council of its Precept demand for the coming Financial Year no later than 31<sup>st</sup> January. In view of that, the Committee recommended that the Council comply with that requirement first and set a Budget later. The implication is that – if the Council agrees to set a Precept on 28<sup>th</sup> January – it must then work on a Budget in the weeks between then and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.
- 3.3 Discussions between the Town Clerk/RFO, the Mayor and the Chairman of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee led that Committee to agree to calculate the Precept starting from a 2.9% increase to the Band D Council Taxpayer. The District Council had already provided the Council Tax Base figure for the coming year showing an increase in the number of Council Taxpaying households. From figure, the Town Clerk was able to calculate that a 2.9% increase at Band D would allow the total Precept to increase from £300,000 in 2018/19 (including Council Tax Support Grant, CTSG) to £354,250 in 2019/20, in which year CTSG would cease being paid.

3.4 List of Outstanding Decisions Affecting the Budget

- 3.3 Major Projects - The Committee is requested to undertake further work with Officers on the following existing budgetlines and proposals:

£30,000	CCTV. Awaiting Council decision on CCTV in town centre. Current plan is for the Council's £30,000 contribution to be split over two years. Possible alternative scheme for mobile CCTV worn by a Town Warden proposed by Councillor Simon Mitchell, would cost c.£30,000 per year, as an ongoing financial commitment.
£30-£50,000	Council offices. Rebuild wooden staircase in 2019/20 or defer? Currently waiting for advice from Conservation specialist on how to argue for a cheaper demolition and like-for-like replacement scheme, rather than an expensive repair using salvaged materials. The Town Clerk recommends that the

	restoration of the stone mullion windows be deferred until completion of the staircase.
£ 38,912	Remainder of £78.9k S.106 money ring-fenced for Pre-school provision. The Council allocated £40,000 in principle to St Mary's Playgroup, leaving £38,912 for re-allocation. The Town Clerk recommends that all or most of this money be returned to the General Fund, to keep the Precept / Council Tax down.
£ 12,000	Possible additional 0.5 FTE Grounds Team member for daily cleaning the centre of Tetbury (part of 'Pride in our Town')
£ 3,000	New Earmarked Reserve for replacement Grounds Team flatbed truck (Year 1 of 3?)
£ TBC	Planned phased restoration of General Reserve in accordance with the approved Reserves Policy (17% recommended by the Town Clerk).
£5 - 8,000	Outstanding grant to the Dolphins Hall Management Committee for upkeep of the grounds
£3,500	Request from the Youth Club (TAYCT) for 'top-up' grant
£ TBC	Request for Play Equipment in this Agenda
£ TBC	Other projects yet to be identified

**The total of this list ranges from £124,412 to £147,412 without making allowance for the 'TBC' items**

4. Financial Implications

Parish and Town Councils are required to notify the District Council of its Precept demand for the coming Financial Year no later than 31<sup>st</sup> January.

5. Legal Implications

Best practice is to set a Precept as the figure left as the shortfall in the Budget. However, while there is a requirement to notify the District Council of the Precept by 31<sup>st</sup> January, there is no deadline for setting a Budget. The Council can set its Budget (to match the Precept) between 31<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March (i.e. the day before the next Financial Year starts). It would even be possible to start the next Financial Year without a Budget, but this would be very poor practice.

Stephen Holley  
Town Clerk