

# HARTLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Agenda Item No 7

## Parish Council Budget and Precept 2019/20

### Background

This report sets out the suggested budget for the Parish Council for 2019-20 together with a proposal for the precept for that year.

### Considerations

The Finance and Risk Management Advisory Group has looked in detail at the Council's finances and agreed that it was important that a balanced budget should be set for 2019/20 initially without the need to call on any reserves. The Group were strongly of the view that it was not viable to continue to draw from its reserves in future years as these would inevitably run out at some point.

I have therefore prepared a draft budget for 2019/20 based purely on the income which can be expected from the precept. A copy is attached. This budget covers all the standard annual items. It also relies on an increase in the precept of 5% which I will explain further in the report. The only additional item included in the budget is the launch of the community project as the Council has already committed to supporting this event.

The two significant items not included in the budget are:-  
Contribution to PCC re grass cutting in the Churchyard - £1,600  
Annual Maintenance of the Church clock - £200

The Parish Council will need to decide whether they wish to fund the above items from reserves.

I have also not included the cost of the Parish Elections (approx £3,500) as this is an unknown at this stage but if needed could be met from reserves. Equally we need to be able to cover any unexpected costs resulting from the community project or any new projects which the Council decides to proceed with.

I would also draw your attention to the fact that we have not received confirmation from the County Council that they will continue funding the Parish Lengthsman scheme in 2019/20. If they do not propose to do so or they reduce the level of funding, the Parish Council will need to come back to this issue at a later date.

By producing a balanced budget the Parish Council will be holding the following reserve funds:-

Provisional end of year bank balance	- £14,500
Scottish Widows Account	- £10,000
HSBC Savings Account	- £6,364
Former Tennis Club Account	- £680
Total Balances	- £31,544

The balanced budget referred earlier is based on a total income of £25,592.00. This is made up of a precept of £24,100 plus the Parish Grant of £1,492. This would mean that the parish precept for 2019/20 would need to increase by 5% over the figure for the current year. In real terms this would mean an increase of 85p in the Parish Council precept for a band D property. Given the range of new facilities the Parish Council has provided plus the smartwater initiative, I believe that an increase of this level is reasonable.

### Recommendations

1. The Parish Council approves the proposal to increase the parish precept by 5% in 2019/20 giving an income of £24,100 plus the Parish Grant of £1,492.
2. The Parish Council approves the draft budget for 2019/20

3. The Parish Council to consider whether to commit reserves to support the churchyard maintenance and the annual maintenance of the church clock.

**N Gulliver Responsible Financial Officer**  
**02/01/19**