



High Wycombe Town Committee

Date: 19 January 2016
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

Membership

Chairman: Councillor
Vice Chairman: Councillor

Councillors: K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, H Bull,
Mrs L M Clarke OBE, M Clarke, M P Davy, R Farmer, S Graham,
M Hanif, M A Hashmi, A E Hill, M Hussain JP, A Hussain, M Hussain,
M E Knight, B E Pearce, R Raja, S K Raja and Ms J D Wassell

Standing Deputies

Councillors:

Agenda

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Agenda Item 10

SPECIAL EXPENSES BUDGET 2016/17

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Wards affected: All High Wycombe Town

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET

That the committee notes and recommends an option for the Special Expenses budget for 2016/17 and the effect of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant on precept budgets for Special Expenses.

NB: The High Wycombe Town Committee is an advisory body only. In the main, its decisions are recommendations to Cabinet or to Council.

Reasons for Urgency

The report includes recommending the setting of Council Tax for the High Wycombe Town Committee area. The next meeting of the Committee would be too late to consider the report as it occurs in March after Council tax has been set.

Corporate Implications

1. The financial implications have been set out in this report. Under section 35(2) (d) of the Local Government Act 1992 any expenses incurred by the Authority in performing a part of the District functions performed elsewhere in the District by a Parish Council are Special Expenses unless a contrary resolution is in force. The Council passed a resolution on 4 January 1993 making all such expenses a general expense, with the exception of certain items detailed in the resolution, which are treated as Special Expenses.
2. In previous years the government has provided additional grant to Councils who freeze their share of Council Tax. This scheme has been discontinued for 2016/17. Rather District Councils with a Council Tax rate in the lowest quartile nationally, such as Wycombe District Council, have the option to increase their Council Tax by up to £5 per Band D property in 2016/17 before a referendum is required. The limit for Councils who have a Council Tax level above this level remains 1.99%
3. As the Special Expenses precept is included in the District calculation, any movement above a 0.5% reduction in the Town Council's precept will mean the District Council will not be able to increase its precept by the full £5. For example, freezing the precept at the current level of £17.50 per Band D would result in the District Council being able to increase its Council Tax by a maximum of £4.98 before a referendum would be required.
4. An increase in the Council Tax Base in year means that High Wycombe Town Committee will receive an extra £5k in precept at the current level of £17.50 Band D. This would create a budget surplus of £4.6k. A reduction of 1.09% would result in a Band D tax rate of £17.31 and would result in a balanced

budget for 2016/17. The Town Committee has forecasted working balances of £604k at 31 March 2016.

Executive Summary

5. This report sets out the proposed budget for 2016/17 for Special Expenses and the impact on the precept. Details of the estimates for 2016/17 are attached at Appendix A.
6. Options for the setting of the Special Expenses precept 2016/17 are outlined in this report.
7. The Council Tax precept is based on the tax base calculated in terms of Band D equivalent properties. The tax base for 2016/17 is 21,505.14 (21,213.59 in 2015/16). The increase in properties means that the Town Council precept will increase by £5,039 if the Band D charge for Special Expenses is left unchanged, amounting to a total precept of £376,340 in 2016/17. A reduction in the Band D tax rate by 1.09% would result in a precept of £372,300 and a balanced budget for 2016/17.
8. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), which has resulted in a reduction in the Council Tax base for the High Wycombe Town area from 2013/14 onwards, has been base-lined into the Council's overall settlement. As part of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announcement in November 2015 this has been reduced significantly for 2016/17. As a result, the amount given to the Town Council and Parishes has been reduced in line with this and for High Wycombe Town will be £37,500 in 2016/17. This is a reduction from the 2015/16 level of £45,200.

Background and Issues

9. A separate fund is maintained for Special Expenses. Income is raised by a precept on the town's inhabitants and interest is credited on the fund balance.
10. Central Government has not extended the Council Tax Freeze Grant provided in previous years and has instead introduced a £5 per Band D referendum limit for District Councils whose tax rate is in the lowest quarter nationally, which includes Wycombe District Council. For the purposes of calculating a tax increase within the referendum limit, the Special Expenses precept must be included within the District-wide calculation. The options for increasing or reducing the Council Tax precept effects the District Council's ability to levy the maximum £5 permitted amount of Council tax and the implications are detailed within this report.

2016/17 Budget Overview (Appendix A)

11. For 2016/17 the estimated Net Cost of Services is £421,800 (£419,600 in 2015/16). The precept of £372k (£371k in 2015/16), shown at Appendix A, has been calculated using a Band D tax rate of £17.31, a reduction of 1.09%.

After adjusting for the capital charge credit, CTS grant and working balance interest there is an annual spend of £372k.

12. In previous years, management salary costs were charged to the Salaries lines within budgets. However in the current financial year these have been re-categorised to overheads showing variances in salary costs and group management overheads across the cost centres for High Wycombe Town Committee detailed in Appendix A.

Options for Setting Precept

13. Options for setting the Council Tax precept are set out in Table 1 below and show the impact to the annual surplus/deficit and to working balances, after adjusting for the capital charge credit, CTS grant and interest. The table also shows how the precept set by the Town Committee impacts the maximum level the District Council can increase Council tax.

Table 1: Council Tax Precept Option for 2016/17, excluding CTS Grant and interest of Working Balances and excluding West Wycombe

Option	% Change	Band D	Precept	(Surplus) / Deficit	WDC Band D Ceiling
1	2.0%	£17.85	£383,867	(£12,161)	£4.87
2	1.0%	£17.68	£380,211	(£8,505)	£4.92
3	0.0%	£17.50	£376,340	(£4,634)	£4.98
4	-0.5%	£17.42	£374,620	(£2,914)	£5.00
5	-1.0%	£17.33	£372,684	(£978)	£5.03*
6	-1.09%	£17.31	£372,300	0	£5.04*
7	-2.0%	£17.15	£368,813	£2,893	£5.09*

* A reduction in the Town Council's precept enables the District Council to increase by more than £5 before a referendum is required as overall when both are combined the sum would still be below a £5 increase.

14. The table shows that anything above a 0.5% reduction in the High Wycombe Town Committee's precept would impact on the District Council's ability to levy the maximum Council Tax increase permitted by Central Government. A 1.09% reduction would result in a balanced budget for the year for the Town Council due to the increase in the council tax base.
15. The current recommended minimum level of working balances is £150k. High Wycombe Town Council working balances forecast to be £608k at 31 March 2016. Approval for £61k of expenditure on allotments is sought in a separate paper to this committee meeting and, if approved, would be funded by reducing reserves.
16. It is not proposed to alter the recommended minimum £150k level of working balances at this time.

17. With balances of £636k and growth in the council tax base leading to a forecast budget surplus, the Committee will need to consider the justifications of any increase should this be recommended to Cabinet.

Next Steps

18. These proposals and the Committee's comments and recommendations will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 8th February 2016. Council tax for 2016/17 will be set by full Council at its meeting on 25th February 2016.

Background Papers

Papers held by Financial Services

Agenda Item 10

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN AREA

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2016

SUMMARY

2014/15 Net Actual £	2015/16 Net Estimate £		2016/17 Gross Expenditure £	2016/17 Income & Credits £	2016/17 Net Expenditure £
SPECIAL EXPENSES					
129,078	130,600	Recreational Grounds (Local)	143,800	(6,700)	137,100
28,905	62,500	Allotments	45,700	0	45,700
152,402	168,000	High Wycombe Cemetery	281,000	(101,300)	179,700
1,681	5,900	Footway Lighting and Bus Shelters	6,600	0	6,600
33,218	28,000	Financial Assistance to Vol Groups	28,000	0	28,000
3,000	3,000	Town Twinning	3,000	0	3,000
5,720	20,000	Community Grants/Financial Assistance	20,000	0	20,000
(1,075)	1,600	Other Expenses	1,700	0	1,700
352,929	419,600	Total Special Expenses	529,800	(108,000)	421,800
(10,800)	(14,400)	Capital charges credit	0	0	(7,400)
(4,121)	(4,900)	Interest on balances	0	0	(4,600)
	(45,200)	Council Tax Support Contribution (CTS C	0	0	(37,500)
338,008	355,100	Total including Interest, Capital Charges and CTS Grant	529,800	(108,000)	372,300
2,203	0	Wrights Meadow Community Centre			0
	5,000	Castlefield Community Centre Capital			0
	23,000	Allotments Feasibility Study			61,000
	15,000	Cemetery Retaining Wall repairs			0
<u>340,211</u>	<u>398,100</u>	Net spending for year			<u>433,300</u>
(556,938)	(636,174)	Balance b/f			(604,074)
(419,447)	(366,000)	Collection Fund precept (Based on £17.31 Band D rate)			(372,300)
(636,174)	(604,074)	Balance c/f			(543,074)

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

RECREATION GROUNDS (LOCAL)

Cost Centre: CNFB31

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Sarah Randall

ACCOUNT		2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	ACTUAL £	BUDGET £	BUDGET £
A001	<i>Staff Costs</i> Salaries	9,746	15,500	0
	<i>Premises Related Expenses</i>			
B301	Maintenance to Grounds	5,468	6,900	6,900
B360	Tree Works	2,448	1,000	1,500
B321	Minor Maintenance Work	194	0	0
	<i>Supplies and Services</i>			
F012	Cleansing Contract Payment	0	1,900	1,900
	GROSS CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	17,856	25,300	10,300
	Income			
L740	Football	(1,846)	(6,700)	(6,700)
	TOTAL CONTROLLABLE INCOME	(1,846)	(6,700)	(6,700)
	NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	16,010	18,600	3,600
H001	<i>Recharges</i>			
IR006	Queen Victoria Road	177	300	0
IR009	Maintenance of Grounds	94,200	94,200	94,200
IR012	Insurance	400	400	0
IR028	IT Non Staff	1,997	1,500	0
IR037	Central Support	3,412	1,200	3,800
IR038	Group Management	0	0	22,000
J010	Capital Charges	12,882	14,400	13,500
	GROSS NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	113,068	112,000	133,500
	NET EXPENDITURE	129,078	130,600	137,100

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

ALLOTMENTS

Cost Centre: CNFB32

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Sarah Randall

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
A001	<i>Staff Costs</i> Salaries	13,563	29,700	0
	<i>Premises Related Expenses</i>			
B301	Maintenance to Grounds	1,195	1,500	1,500
B360	Tree works	450	1,000	1,100
B740	Water Costs		0	
	<i>Supplies and Services</i>			
D461	Computer (Colony)	250	0	0
D622	Software/Computer Expenses	706	1,000	1,000
	GROSS CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	16,164	33,200	3,600
	Income			
M529	Rent	(2,682)	0	0
M536	Fees and Charges	(4,328)	0	0
P798	Other Income	(58)	0	0
	TOTAL CONTROLLABLE INCOME	(7,068)	0	0
	NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	9,096	33,200	3,600
H001	<i>Recharges</i>			
IR006	Queen Victoria Road	591	800	0
IR009	Maintenance of Grounds	7,100	7,100	7,100
IR028	IT Non Staff	7,080	7,500	0
IR037	Central Support	5,038	13,900	0
IR038	Group Management	0	0	35,000
	GROSS NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	19,809	29,300	42,100
	NET EXPENDITURE	28,905	62,500	45,700

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

HIGH WYCOMBE CEMETERY

Cost Centre: CNEB05

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Sarah Randall

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
A001	Salaries	59,492	61,800	38,000
	<i>Premises Related Expenses</i>			
B001	Repairs & Maintenance		0	
B002	Cemetery Lodge Works	25,122	0	0
B301	Maintenance to Grounds	18,879	21,900	21,900
B360	Tree Works	3,288	4,500	4,500
B401	General Maintenance	5,212	4,500	4,500
B703	Electricity	281	500	500
B704	Gas	611	800	800
B735	Rates	8,261	7,100	8,200
B737	Council Tax - void	1,527	0	0
B740	Water Authority Services	25	2,400	100
	<i>Supplies and Services</i>			
D001	Equipment	443	500	500
D040	Equipment - Hire/Lease	547	600	600
D110	Steal Frame Purchases	6,720	0	0
D132	Printing	35	200	200
D389	Concrete Burial Chamber	3,360		
D461	Various Fees		0	0
D611	Telephones	710	1,000	1,000
D613	Mobile Phones	0	0	100
D622	Computer Software	5,351	3,000	3,000
D899	Other Expenditure		0	0
D899	Works to Terracing	52,953	0	0
F012	Cleansing	3,400	3,400	3,400
	GROSS CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	196,217	112,200	87,300

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

HIGH WYCOMBE CEMETERY

Cost Centre: CNEB05

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Sarah Randall

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
Income				
M342	Interment Fees-Private	(56,699)	(31,100)	(31,100)
M344	Concrete Chamber income	(14,488)	0	0
M343	Steel Frame Income	(20,493)	0	0
M345	Monument Fees	(10,761)	(12,200)	(12,200)
M346	Grave Maintenance	(400)	(2,000)	(400)
M529	Rents	(13,970)	(11,100)	(11,100)
M551	Burial Rights Purchase	(75,615)	(41,000)	(41,000)
M552	Grave Reservation	(713)	(500)	(500)
P798	Other Income	(2,672)	(5,000)	(5,000)
TOTAL CONTROLLABLE INCOME		(195,811)	(102,900)	(101,300)
NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		406	9,300	(14,000)
H001	<i>Recharges</i>			
IR006	Queen Victoria Road	1,063	1,500	1,300
IR009	Maintenance of Grounds-Contract	125,900	125,900	125,900
IR012	Insurance	300	500	600
IR018	Insurance - staff	498	0	0
IR024	Staff Overheads	0	0	0
IR028	IT Non Staff	13,616	11,900	9,500
IR037	Central Support	10,619	18,900	19,400
IR038	Group Management	0	0	37,000
GROSS NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		151,996	158,700	193,700
NET EXPENDITURE		152,402	168,000	179,700

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

FOOTWAY LIGHTING & BUS SHELTERS

Cost Centre: CNEB01

Responsible Officer: John McMillan
Operational Officer: Stuart Ross

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL	2015/2016 BUDGET	2016/2017 BUDGET
		£	£	£
	<i>Premises Related Expenses</i>			
B001	Repairs and Maintenance	1,448	1,800	1,800
B703	Electricity	0	1,900	1,900
	<i>Supplies and Services</i>			
D001	Equipment	0	2,200	2,200
GROSS CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		1,448	5,900	5,900
NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		1,448	5,900	5,900
H001	<i>Recharges</i>			
IR037	Central Support	233	0	700
GROSS NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE		233	0	700
NET EXPENDITURE		1,681	5,900	6,600

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY GROUPS

Cost Centre: CNFC01/02

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Gillian Stimpson

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
	<i>Supplies and Services</i>			
D711	Asst. to Voluntary Sector - Hilltop	13,000	13,000	13,000
D711	Asst. to Voluntary Sector - Castlefield	20,218	15,000	15,000
	NET EXPENDITURE	33,218	28,000	28,000

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

TOWN TWINNING

SERVICE CODE:

Cost Centres: CNFB03

Responsible Officer:

Elaine Jewell

Operational Officer:

Gillian Stimpson

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
D717	Grant - Town Twinning Committee	3,000	3,000	3,000
	NET EXPENDITURE	3,000	3,000	3,000

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

COMMUNITY GRANTS

SERVICE CODE:

Cost Centres: CNFB06

Responsible Officer:

Elaine Jewell

Operational Officer:

Gillian Stimpson

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
	OTHER EXPENSES CHARGED ON HIGH WYCOMBE AREA			
D717	Financial assistance-Community/Village Halls	5,720	20,000	20,000
	NET EXPENDITURE	5,720	20,000	20,000

HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

Estimates for the year ending 31st March 2017

OTHER EXPENSES

SERVICE CODE: Cost Centres: VARIOUS

Responsible Officer: Elaine Jewell
Operational Officer: Sarah Randall

ACCOUNT CODE	SUBJECTIVE HEADING	2014/2015 ACTUAL £	2015/2016 BUDGET £	2016/2017 BUDGET £
OTHER EXPENSES CHARGED ON HIGH WYCOMBE AREA				
D899	Commemorative Services -General	(1,075)	1,700	1,700
N005	Rutland Hospital Trust-Investment Interest	0	(100)	0
NET EXPENDITURE		(1,075)	1,600	1,700