

Background

As a reminder, each Committee, where appropriate, will prepare and manage their own budget, community responsibilities and take financial accountability for projects, in line with our Financial Regulations and working closely with the Executive Clerk (or Deputy Clerk).

The Finance Committee will produce a recommendation for the Full Council and Staffing Committee budget.

Budgets will be submitted to Full Council for approval, monitored monthly by Committees and reviewed quarterly by the Finance Committee.

Precept Budget for 2022/23 and allocation of reserves.

Overview

- The Precept for each year is submitted to Hart District Council **by the end of January** of the year the new precept is received (i.e. January 2022 for the financial year April 2022 – March 2023). As a reminder, the Precept is the proportion of Council Tax that is allocated to Parish/Town Councils for statutory expenditure within the Parish as guided by our legal powers.
- The new budget will be prepared using the principles of Zero-Based Budgeting however will be guided by previous year's spend, future planned projects and the HWPC's core duties.
- **Whilst the focus will primarily be the precept 22/23, plans for the next two years budget should also be considered, although these will be as a guide only**
- In parallel with the Precept Budget process, relevant Committees will also prepare budgets for project activities which utilise Ear Marked Reserves and/or S106 funds.
- The Council builds up Reserves to cover expenditure on projects and as contingency for unplanned expenditure in current and future years. The Committees are responsible for proposing the allocation of Reserves as part of the budget process for approval by Full Council.
- Committees are required to review current allocations and make recommendations for approval at Full Council at the January Full Council or a date to be confirmed. This will allow priority to be given to Precept approval.

Timeline and Process

- **October Committee Meeting:** Committees will discuss and plan their 2022/23 budget. Whilst Committees are encouraged to review and question previous expenditure, budgets must respect any current contracts or previously agreed projects which are already underway. Members can be appointed to work on their budget outside of the Committee meeting provided the following timescales are met.
- **November Committee Meeting:** Each Committee will provisionally agree their budget ready to submit to the Executive Clerk by .
- **December Full Council:** Review of Committee Proposals.
- The Finance Committee will collate and review the figures to be submitted to Full Council

- **January Full Council:** Budget ratified. The aim is that all Council members are fully aware and informed of the final budget prior to the meeting and this will be for ratification only.
- **The budgeting process needs to be complete so that HWPC can fully approve the agreed budget at the Full Council meeting in January 2022.**

Next Steps Summary

- **October Committee:** Agendas will include discussion of this document and agreement on how draft budgets will be produced for approval at the November Committee meetings.
- **November Committee:** Agendas will include approval of draft budgets for submission to the Executive Clerk by Friday 26th November.
- **December Full Council:** Agenda will include an overview of Committee budgets as submitted.
- **December Finance Committee:** review the collated budget and reserve allocation prior to circulation for approval at January Full Council.
- **January Full Council:** ratification of the budget and allocation of Ear Marked Reserves and S106 funds.