

PC Meeting – 12th January 2026

Agenda Item 8 - Finance

Wiltshire Council require Parish Councils to confirm their precept request by 20th January 2026.

You will see from the attached spreadsheet that the precept for 2024/2025 was £15,122 and for the current year, 2025/2026, it was £15,878, an increase of 5%.

When setting the precept councillors need to take account of the fixed costs associated with running the organisation together with any associated maintenance costs; the additional costs arising from any 'developments' that are felt necessary/beneficial, and, sufficient reserves to cover emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. In addition it has been the practice for the PC to include a 'project budget line' which allows the PC to build up over time a sum that could fund projects that would be too costly in any one year or to make provision for future events that it is known will require significant funding eg at some point the car park by the old school is going to require re-tarmac

You will see from the spreadsheet that the amount budgeted to spend in the current year (2025/2026) was in excess of the precept. The PC was able to do this safely because of the significant amount brought forward from the previous financial year and also the fact that some of the budget lines are aspirational rather than mandatory. For example the village grants, whilst a valuable source of revenue for village organisations are entirely at the discretion of the PC. (It is worth saying that in any one year the bulk of the carry forward amount is the sum budgeted for reserves and/or projects.)

It can be seen that in the current year there have been some significant 'underspends'; the budgeted cost of the elections was based on the assumption that there would be enough candidates coming forward to cause an election, this was not the case, there were only two applications for village grants, the training budget was barely used. Whilst both the R o W and Streetscene budgets are underspent it is thought that there will be additional expenditure in the current year for both of these areas.

It is recommended that with the exception of the election line the budgeted figures for the FY 26/27 be the same as for the previous year. It is also recommended that the PC do not increase the precept for the next financial year. This will show on paper as a £614 shortfall but will easily be absorbed by the probable carry forward figure or an adjustment to the level carried for projects and reserves.