

Budget & Precept Report 2023/2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The budget for 2023/24 and Precept is required to be set at this Parish Council Meeting.
- 1.2 The precept for 2022/23 was £527,555 which equated to £163.83 per band D household (4.20% year on year increase).
- 1.3 The parish council met on the 16 January 2023 to discuss the new budget and projected precept demand for 2023/2024. Following a lack of information surrounding certain services and costs which may be ceased in the new year, the parish council resolved to defer the budget decisions until the 20 February 2023 meeting.

2.0 Report Details

- 2.1 Using the budget provided by the Parish Council in 2022/23 as a starting point and taking into consideration priorities discussed over the last 6 months the 2023/2024 budget has been prepared and is attached to this report as Appendix A.
- 2.2 The council tax base has been slightly increased from 3220.2 to 3419.30 which is a 6.19% increase.
- 2.3 The parish council expect the tax base figure to continue to increase over the next 2-3 years with the new housing developments being built at Marlborough Road, North Wroughton and Thorney / Langton park.
- 2.4 The Council Tax Support Grant will remain at £9,760.00 in line with Central Government for 2023/2024, a copy of the letter is attached as Appendix B.
- 2.5 Due to the increasing occupation within middle and west Wichelstowe, it is likely that Wroughton Parish Council will need to continue to provide further services in this area, the estimated build out completion time can be expected of 10 -15 years (market depending). Currently the parish council maintain the open spaces in middle and west Wichelstowe including the lakes (not the water).
- 2.6 Swindon Borough Council has confirmed that the Library staffing resource will be removed from the parish council from the 31 March 2023.
Both the Wroughton Community Asset Trust (WCAT) and parish council have had reached a decision that the parish council will take on the management of the Wroughton Library and its staffing from 01 April 2023.
The cost to run the Wroughton Community Library throughout 2023/2024 should remain at a slightly lower budget of £33,716.



- 2.7 Following discussions with The Ellendune Hall Trust (EHT) the parish council have agreed to award a grant application amount of £20,000 to cover revenue costs for 2023/2024. The EHT are hopeful in winning a grant award to help fund the solar panel installation for the community centre however the parish council, as custodian trustees, should be mindful of the increasing energy costs overall for 2023/2024.
The EHT are continuing to work with the parish council to establish cost saving measures and boost income streams moving forward.
- 2.8 In December 2022 the parish council was served notice by the Wroughton and Wichelstowe Parish Church to take over the ground's maintenance service due to the churchyard now being full and therefor closed from March 2023.
The Parish Council will no longer provide a grant to the Wroughton Parish Church to assist with maintenance of the Churchyard and have subsequently served notice to Swindon Borough Council.
The parish council are due to meet with Swindon Borough Council in at the end of January 2023 to discuss the maintenance provision further.
- 2.9 With the unknown outcome of information discussed at 2.8 and the high probability that Swindon Borough Council will pass over additional services to parish councils in 2024/2025, the parish council should consider increasing outside services within future budget setting.
- 2.10 The parish council grounds team are intending to be relocated to a new rental premise within the local area and existing EMR funds will be used to offset any potential business rental expenditure. They are currently still based at Maunsell Way however expect to be moved within est 9-12 months.
- 2.11 All parish council employees have been awarded a flat rate increase to their spinal column points at a total of £1,925, this increase was larger than expected and so the payroll budget overspent.
- 2.12 Grants awarded by the parish council throughout 2022/2023:
- Wroughton Bowls Club: £6,000 to go towards kitchen renovations and maintenance.
 - The Wroughton Community Asset Trust: £40,000 Community Library
 - The Ellendune Hall Trust: £15,000 towards operating costs
 - The Wroughton Churchyard: £7,000 for tree maintenance costs
- 2.13 Swindon Borough Council have estimated the costs for the parish council elections in May 2023 to be £6,964. Additional funds have already been moved to EMR in respect of this budget.
- 2.14 The projection for the financial year ending 2022/2023 is a surplus of £119,476.
- 2.15 It is recommended that the parish council should retain up to 3 months operating costs, with the current precept set at £527,555 this totals a requirement of £131,889.

2.15 The draft budget for 2023/2024 is attached to this report as Appendix A.

The resulting precept demand will be £612,828 which equates to £179.23 per annum per Band D household.

*This is a year on year increase of £0.30 per week.

2.16

Financial Year	Predicted Precept Requirement (£)	YoY Increase % (per Band D)	Band D Equivalent	Notes
2020/21	477,477.00	4.63	£150.66	Equates to £2.90 per week
2021/22	503,941.00	4.36	£157.23	Equates to £3.24 per week
2022/23	527,555.00	4.20	£163.83	Equates to £3.15 per week
2023/24	612,828.00	9.40	£179.23	Equates to £3.45 per week

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 The budget for 2023/24 is approved as per Appendix A.

3.2 The Precept is set at 612,828 resulting in a £179.23 per annum charge per Band D household.

3.1 To note the EMR funds for the current financial year 2022/23, attached as appendix B.

3.3 The Precept Form from Swindon Borough Council, attached as Appendix C is signed.

3.4 To note the large increase in precept for 2023/2024 can be summarised as follows:

- Forward planning of additional open space services required, both Churchyard and general.
 - Additional grounds team vehicle lease
 - Additional tools / equipment
- Increased and unexpected energy costs for both the parish council and Ellendune Hall Trust.
- Upgraded contract cleaning for parish managed and owned buildings.
- Large increase in parish office and library room rent costs.
- Councillor allowances for 15 elected members.
- Enhanced financial software packages.
- Increase of parish council insurance.
- Increase with trade waste charges, fly tipping increase and disposal.
- Maintenance on Maunsell Way Pavilion in current condition.
- Replacement of Weir Field play area.