



# Town Council decides 2024-25 budget

The Council Precept is the total amount budgeted to provide Council services in the coming year. At its meeting on 16th January, the Town Council unanimously agreed on a total amount of £428,227 for the coming financial year starting in April.

The Town Council places this request on Dorset Council annually, as does the Police and Fire Service. The Council Precept is the smallest portion of the total Council Tax bill.

With the current cost-of-living crisis we have been very reluctant to make things more difficult for residents, and we have spent a lot of time looking at the figures, reviewing budgets and suppliers and having in-depth discussions on what we want to achieve for our community in 2024/25.

We know that the improvements that we delivered for the Town in 2023/24 have been much appreciated by residents and there have been many favourable comments on them. People have particularly liked changes such as the improved drainage and resurfacing at the Recreation Ground, the newly resurfaced Cemetery car park and new public toilets at the Recreation Ground. Many of you took part in a well-attended and much enjoyed Community Coronation Picnic, and the Christmas Celebration was very popular with parents and children.

Building on these improvements, we have set aside funds from the Precept for 2024/25 for:

- The refurbishment of Redwood Road Play Area
- An upgrade to the Clocktower site
- The enhancement of four garden plots at Frampton Terrace to create a wildlife haven and support biodiversity
- A Community Picnic at the Recreation Ground in June 2024 as part of the Town's commemorations of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day landings
- Increasing Grant Aid provision in support of local organisations.

**Compared to last year's budget, the increased Precept for a Band D property means finding an extra £2.25 per month (52p per week).**

This year's increase (24%) on the previous year's budget is greater than last year's due to a number of factors leading to an increase in supplier costs to council for the services which we provide to the community. Further, in 2023/24 the Council used some of its savings to reduce the Precept request (£125,000). Lytchett Minster and Upton Town Council Mayor, Councillor Ray Griffin commented, 'We are confident that this small weekly increase represents value for money in terms of the projects and community benefits we will deliver to our community'.

Unlike many other parish and town councils, we have very limited opportunities to generate income outside of the Precept. We don't have income generators such as car parks, beach huts or community buildings. However, we are continually looking for external funding sources and have recently appointed Cllr Sean Gabriel as our 'funding champion' to pursue these opportunities. We are currently awaiting the outcome of a number of funding applications to enable us to deliver more projects.

If you have any questions on the above do not hesitate to contact us by either by email or phone

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