

Chailey Parish Council Commentary on the Budget and Council Tax Precept for 2018/19

Each year the Parish Council spends money under a number of headings, for example on maintaining, protecting and running parish assets, including important buildings such as the Reading Room and the Windmill. It also makes grants and provides financial support to a number of parish organisations. It pays the costs of maintaining the Parish Office and of employing the Clerk. The Council estimates that it will spend £63,889 next year on these and other recurring items. This is a rise of about 12% over the budget set a year ago.

The principal reason for this increase is the inclusion in the 2018/19 budget of a new item of expenditure, being the amount of £4,300 that will be needed to meet the annual repayments on a loan which the Council has taken out to help defray the cost of refurbishing the Sports Pavilion in North Chailey. This item accounts for about 7.5% of the increase with the Council's other budgeted routine expenditure rising by about 4.5%.

In addition to budgeting for costs which recur from year to year, the Council budgets for the cost of any exceptional or one-off items of expenditure. The only such item budgeted for in 2018/19 relates to the Sports Pavilion refurbishment. It is expected that work will begin in February 2018 with some of the cost falling to be paid in 2017/18. The cost that is budgeted to be spent on this important project in 2018/19 is £18,990. On present information it is expected that the main building works will be completed in April 2018.

The Council is therefore budgeting to spend a total of £82,879 in 2018/19. For the most part this expenditure will be met from the amount raised by the Precept and from the use of reserves held by the Council. In recent years the Council has set the Precept just above the level necessary to meet the budgeted routine day to day costs of running the Parish (after taking account of the small amount of income and grant received). To balance the books in this way in 2018/19 would have meant raising the precept by over 8% but Councillors have agreed to restrict the increase to 5%. By doing this the Council is not passing on the general increase in budgeted costs and the new loan repayments in full but is instead dipping into the Council's reserves to meet some of this additional expenditure.

The increase in the Precept means that the amount to be paid by a household with a property in Band D for Council Tax purposes will be £44.43p per annum, an annual increase of £2.12p or 18p per month. The additional amount payable will be lower for properties in Council Tax Bands A to C and higher for those in Bands E and above.