

# Waterbeach Parish Council

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## *Reports for Council Meeting 3/12/2013*

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### **Item 8(c)**

#### *Setting the Precept for 2014-2015*

Before we go into too much detail about budgeting for 2014 it would be helpful if the Parish Council could agree on some principles. Members of the Council will have seen the email from the Chair of NALC that outlines the difficult situation in which we shall find ourselves, and I cover the specific effect on Waterbeach below.

In 2013-2014 the total Parish Precept for Waterbeach was £138,480 and the corresponding Band D Council Tax was £81. Looking at this figure in comparison to the Band D Council Tax figures for other parishes in South Cambridgeshire, this places us in the top 25% of Band D Council Tax amounts. This may lead to the assumption that our Council Tax is unusually high. However, it is worth noting that five years ago we sat in a very similar position in the ‘league table’ so our precept has not changed significantly in comparison to those of other South Cambridgeshire parishes.

It is also instructive to compare our Council Tax with some neighbouring Parishes in South Cambridgeshire. At £81, our Band D tax is higher than Fen Ditton, Milton and Landbeach but lower than Histon, Impington and Cottenham. In addition, over the last 9 years (the period for which data is available on the SCDC website) our band D Council Tax has gone up by a smaller percentage than all but one of those parishes (and this year it only went up by 0.4%). The table below shows the figures:

Parish	Parish Council Band D Tax 2004-2005	Parish Council Band D Tax 2013-2014	Average yearly increase
Landbeach	£27.93	£49.63	6.60%
Fen Ditton	£38.45	£63.16	5.67%

Milton	£48.46	£74.25	4.86%
Waterbeach	£50.33	£81.00	5.43%
Impington	£46.64	£81.58	6.41%
Histon	£42.24	£81.87	7.63%
Horningsea	£48.63	£85.41	6.46%
Cottenham	£38.54	£87.92	9.60%

The Parish component of the Band D Council Tax is arrived at by dividing the Parish Precept by the Council Tax Base. We have received preliminary notice from the District Council that, for 2014-1015 the Council Tax Base for Waterbeach will be 1611.2. This is a significant reduction and means that, if we keep our Parish precept the same next year (£138,480), our Band D Council Tax will go up to £85.95, an increase of 6.1%. While this may not seem a large increase in the context of the table above, in a year when the County Council will be raising its Council Tax by less than 2% and when inflation is running at 2.2%, Councillors may feel that such an increase, for no observable benefit to Council Tax payers, is unacceptable.

The table below shows some options we could consider

Increase in Council tax	Band D	Precept	Reduction in precept
0%	£81.00	£130,507	£7,973
2%	£82.62	£133,117	£5,363
4%	£84.24	£135,727	£2,753
6%	£85.86	£138,338	£142
8%	£87.48	£140,948	-£2,468

Some of the savings are quite large, but in the context of our quite substantial reserves and that we can use S106 funds to finance a number of costs that previously had to come out of precept, the Council may decide that we can for this year only afford to cushion the effect of what is, hopefully, a one-off decrease in Council Tax base for one year and make up some of the lost ground next year.

This paper intentionally does not make a recommendation but is intended to promote discussion and guide the Finance Committee to a recommendation when it meets to set the budget.

Michael Williamson – 26/11/13

## Item 9(a)

### **Request for support from Waterbeach Parish Council for the Farmland Museum at Denny Abbey for the financial year 2014/15**

Following my brief talk to the Council at the October meeting about the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey I am now writing to ask whether the Council might be prepared to offer a small amount of financial support for the next financial year.

The Museum and Abbey site is a very peaceful retreat only a short drive from Waterbeach and Landbeach. As well as telling the story of the changes in agricultural practice and life over the ages, it also has a number of objects in the collection which have come from Waterbeach and Landbeach and most of the 'voices' which currently can be heard in the display areas are from much longer recordings made by residents from our two villages. There is a very popular play area and the site is ideal for small children, providing a safe space to run about and a lot of opportunity for imaginative play. Although the café is only open at weekends, limited refreshments (tea, coffee, cold drinks, ice cream and some snacks) are available from the shop on other days. It is also a perfect place for a picnic in good weather. Well behaved dogs on leads are welcome.

Events are publicised locally and there have frequently been items in Beach News but our postcode record of visitors shows that only about 4% of the most local residents visit the Museum and Abbey apart from visits by the school and playgroups.

The staff and trustees would like to feel that the residents of the Waterbeach and Landbeach which are only a few minutes' drive away could benefit more, and feel a greater sense of ownership of this unique site whose history is so intimately linked with their villages. To encourage this the Trustees would like to offer a special 'local visitor season ticket' for the 2014 season which starts on April 1<sup>st</sup>. This would mean that residents of Waterbeach would be able to visit as many times as they liked during the season for half the price of a normal season ticket and not a great deal more than the price of a single ticket.

The pricing structure would be as shown below:

	Normal ticket price for 2014	Local Visitor Season ticket price for L/b and W/b residents
<b>Adult single visit</b>	<b>£5.00</b>	
<b>Concession single visit</b>	£4.00	

<b>Child single visit</b>	£3.00	
<b>Family ticket single visit</b>	£13.00	
<b>Season ticket individual</b>	£13.00	£6.50
<b>Season ticket - concession</b>	£10.00	£5.00
<b>Season Ticket Child</b>	£7.00	£3.50
<b>Season Ticket Family</b>	£30.00	£15.00

All season tickets are eligible for 25% Gift Aid recovery if the purchaser pays income tax at the standard rate.

We hope that active promotion resulting in more local visitors and maximum gift aid recovery would more than offset the effect of the reduced prices. However, it is also very helpful for budgeting to have some secure income. We are extremely grateful to South Cambridgeshire District Council who are still giving us some financial support in very difficult times for them, but it is at a greatly reduced level. Therefore we would like to ask whether Waterbeach Parish Council would consider making a small grant for the 2014 season which starts on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Using the estimated tax base figures circulated by South Cambridgeshire District council a precepted amount of 30p for a band D property would provide a grant of £1278.80. A contribution of this nature is eligible under the rules for section 137 payments.

The trustees would be very grateful if Waterbeach Parish council could give consideration to this request when they are setting the budget for 2014-15.

Jane Williamson (Chair of Trustees at the Farmland Museum at Denny Abbey)

November 18<sup>th</sup> 2013

## Item 9(b)

### **Request for Funds for Waterbeach Independent Library**

The Library has been very successful this year both within the Summer Reading Challenge but also on a day to day basis. The compliments from the Community are constant as regards the efforts Volunteers enter into finding the right books for the type of members who visit the facility, involving all ages. The Friday school class visits have proved very successful with teachers being very complimentary as to the type of approach taken with the students, books sourced for the various school projects and suitable displays arranged. The non fiction books have continued to increase in number in an attempt to cover all age groups as previously there appeared a lack of books in some areas, this has now been addressed. However it will be necessary to continue to keep the non fiction aspect up to date and relevant, for example we recently placed further disclaimers in some books on recycling as the ones we had were actually out of date. This also applies to books relating to science and technology.

The finances have been strictly controlled with fiction books being purchased in some cases as second hand in order to cover the requirements of our readers. Three months ago the situation surrounding the collection of fines was examined by the writer and resulted in all Volunteers being advised fines should be collected regardless of circumstances. This has been very successful and demonstrated to have been a worth while exercise, which will be ongoing.

Administration costs are kept to a minimum by all posters, printing and other such paperwork being carried out within house. This has included puzzle sheets, book marks for the children, posters to keep the attention of the members, bright information sheets and many other types of handouts to maintain attention and interest. We were very fortunate to be presented with a collection of WILL logo stickers, headed paper and compliments slips by a local printer, GTR Print Solutions, which provided a professional aspect to the administration of the Library.

The need for up to date books is vital within any Library service and the days of the old dull book has gone, the present generation expects bright, interesting and relevant reading material. With the reduction of staffing levels and finances within the County Library Service it rests with independent libraries to maintain the interest of the general public to ensure there are opportunities to obtain books locally, in Waterbeach we believe we are achieving this.

Waterbeach Library would request a confirmation from the Waterbeach Parish Council it will be receiving a £500 grant toward the Reading Challenge 2014 and also request a grant of £1000 from the 2014 budget for the purchase of books, running of the Library and other administrative costs, to ensure we maintain the level we have achieved. During 2013 the volunteers provided more than 8500 hours of voluntary time. Given the Library serves some 500 members, and from

visitor counts performed during 2013-2014 seems to have over 8700 visitors per year it is clearly a much used Community facility and deserves support to enable it to build on its recent achievements.

Mrs. M. Crane  
Waterbeach Independent Library

*Note: Annual accounts to end March 2014 will be submitted to the Parish Council when finalised.*

## Item 11(a)

### PARISH CLERK'S REPORT TO PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2013

#### BURGLARIES IN THE VILLAGE

- Councillors and many residents will be aware of the fact that there have been a number of break-ins locally in the last month. The police advised that they had a good result at the weekend and arrested three people whom they believe have been responsible for the recent burglaries of homes, sheds and also thefts from vehicles. However enquiries are on-going and our PCSO will update us when there is anything further.
- It seems timely that we have recently been approached by Victim Support with a request for funding. Would councillors like to make a donation to the charity?
- We are hoping to add two further cameras to the CCTV installation to improve security in the area of the New Pavilion and Groundsman's store and also to help us to identify irresponsible dog owners. The cost for these will be £850 + VAT.
- I have also obtained a quotation for CCTV at the Old Pavilion, but feel that at £3,250 the proposed cost is too high to make this viable. I will investigate a less expensive specification before making any recommendations on this idea.

#### Recent correspondence

- Letter received from Mr G Langley regarding access to Mrs D Langley's garden from the Recreation Ground.

#### Actions arising from last and previous parish council meetings

- **SKATEPARK:** Harris fencing has been put in place to cordon off the half-pipe and the remainder of the skatepark has been reopened. Plans for the new skatepark are elsewhere on the agenda.
- **LEAF COLLECTION:** Further leaf collection has taken place including in Chapel Close.
- **CHITTERING PLAYPARK:** The gate has been repaired and a new self-closer installed.
- **WATERBEACH PLAYGROUND:** The replacement spring and pads have been installed (another new spring is now needed)
- **PARISH OFFICE:** A doorbell has been installed.
- **ROAD PLANINGS HAVE BEEN DELIVERED** and both the ground by the shed and the Car Park potholes have been filled and the surface repaired
- **SIGNS:** Quotations are being obtained for the supply of new signs for the cemetery and recreation ground as well as for Cody Road
- **OFFICE LIGHT:** The light has been installed on the exterior end wall of the office.
- **CEMETERY:** The paths have been sprayed

#### Actions still outstanding from previous meetings

- **IT BUILDING:** Some information has been collated towards finding out the process for applying for listing status but no application has yet been made.
- **CHITTERING PLAYPARK:** The wooden table and seat are still to be repaired.
- **OFFICE RAMP:** One quotation has been received from contractors for widening the ramp. Others are still awaited and are being chased.
- **SOLAR LIGHT AT CHITTERING** is an ongoing saga and whilst some repair work has been done it is still not working.

- **TREES:** The trees on the Gault are still to be replaced
- **BOTTISHAM LOCK:** An application to SCDC Community Chest is still to be made to cover the cost of a new noticeboard and map at Bottisham Lock.
- **WATERBEACH PLAY AREA:** The hammock and cargo net in the play area are still to be replaced.
- **GAULT:** The replacement children's play equipment for the Gault is more expensive than anticipated with the least expensive springer costing £530. The only one available to replace like with like costs £820. There is a similar piece of equipment at Chittering that also needs to be replaced. I am working on getting these at a discounted price but would appreciate confirmation from councillors as to whether this level of costs is acceptable.

#### **Other work planned or in progress**

- **EXTERNAL TOILET:** The light sensor in the external toilet at the Old Pavilion was also damaged by the vandalism and the toilet remains closed until the repair is finished.
- **TENNIS COURTS:** We are not happy with the results of spraying to remove moss so we are getting some outside contractors to review their condition and quote for treating them.
- **CROSSING:** We are planning to make a new application to the County Council, under the Local Highway Improvement Scheme, for a pedestrian crossing on Chapel Street.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

- We have been advised of a proposal to divert Footpath No 17 near the railway line at North Fen (map supplied). The reason for the diversion is in connection with the solar farm construction.
- The South Cambridgeshire Community Awards 2013/14 are now open for nominations. Information can be found at <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/community-awards>. The closing date is 24 January 2014.
- Information has been received from Cambridgeshire County Council regarding their Statement for Community Involvement (SCI). The documents are long and complex and can be found online at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/submitapplication/supportinfo/cambridgeshirestatementofcommunityinvolvement.htm>
- There have been proposals for several different events in Waterbeach in the coming year. If the council wishes to pursue these possibilities, further details can be circulated:
  - a continental/global market
  - circus tyranna – 3 or 4 days
  - a visit from a regional theatre group known as The Keeper's Daughter
- Posters and leaflets have been displayed showing revised times for **Christmas recycling and waste collections**. Collection normally scheduled for
  - Wednesday 25 December will be two days late on Friday 27 December
  - Wednesday 1 January will be two days late on Friday 3 January
  - Wednesday 8 January will be one day late on Friday 9 January
- As some of you are already aware, I shall be away from 12 December until 9 January. We are planning to close the office from 23 December until 3 January. For the rest of the time, we have a temporary agency worker here for 2 days a week but please refer any matters requiring action during my absence to the Chair, Norma Kay. I will deal with all non-urgent matters on my return.

## Item 11(c)

### District Councillors report December

#### Lights and trees at Waterbeach Station Car park

The trees have had a bit of a trim so it is a lot lighter in this area, but this has not deterred thieves as the car park ticket machine has been stolen.

#### Cam Locks

No new updates on the bins and seats but Kate Wood who was dealing with this has left so I am now contacting James Fisher the S106 officer to get this resolved..

#### Trees along the Cemetery drive

Since last month I have had a meeting with James Ryley at the cemetery drive with a team of maintenance contractors so they could see that the trees did need trimming, how much they will do and when I don't know but it definitely is a winter job so I will push every few weeks until something is done.

#### Station Car Park

No doubt people will have seen work going on in this area, Network Rail have said they would like to have a workshop on this site as well as a car park, I hope to have more details by Tuesday evening after I have spoken to the lady dealing with this at Network Rail.

#### Footpaths

It was reported to me last week that the footpath through to Back Stile was very slippery owing to all the leaves falling, of course this happens every year but I felt something had to be done, so David Armstrong, Brenda, and myself spent time last Thursday clearing it and making it safer but we are only half way through. I would like to know who is responsible for this path so we can get it organised to have it cleared every year.

#### Cycle Racks

I have spoken to the conservation department and they have confirmed that we will need planning permission to erect cycle racks outside the One-Stop shop.

## Item 11(e)

### **Waterbeach Independent Library Report to December 2013 Parish Council Meeting**

On November 8th, at Waterbeach Community School Assembly, sixty two students who completed the Summer Reading Challenge were presented with their Certificates and Medals by Library Volunteers in front of their peers. The remaining eight students, who attended Perse School for Girls, Perse Preparatory, St. Matthews Catholic School, Cottenham VC School and Milton School, had their Certificates and Medals personally delivered to their homes and suitably congratulated on their achievement. The numbers registering and completing were considerably increased this year which was very pleasing, but even more satisfying was that Waterbeach Library had managed to engage and retain more boys than girls in the Challenge, 37 boys and 33 girls, which is considered quite an achievement.

Jill Terrell and Marjorie Smith from the County Libraries Service visited Waterbeach Library on November 11th, to acquaint Jill Terrell with the Library and its operational procedures, as she had replaced Sue Williamson at County Level. They were very impressed with the Library, commenting on the selection of books available, how the various sections had been displayed, the excellent use of space, the presentation and professionalism demonstrated in a voluntary library, it was a very successful and rewarding visit from the library professionals. They expressed concern as regards the security of the building and advised an up to date inventory should be compiled and insurance aspects checked. The inventory is in the process of being compiled. It was advised the new SLA will not be addressed until the Spring which I assured Jill Terrell and Marjorie Smith would be acceptable.

The matter as regards the book drop was discussed and whilst the Volunteers have maintained a presence for the book drop in recent weeks it was recognised this could not continue indefinitely. The suggestion was forwarded, once again, of a key safe being attached to the brickwork near the bike shed in order for the book drop to be carried out, with the County bearing the cost of this work. This suggestion has been forwarded to the Head of the School, and no doubt Ms N. Kay, Chair of Waterbeach Parish Council, can add this to the list she has agreed to address at an early date.

As the Councillors will be aware there are a number of problems:-

- a) The continuation of water flowing from the gutters whenever it rains onto the woodwork of the building. This has resulted in woodwork splitting and flaking causing Health and Safety issues. This has been an ongoing problem for some two years, in that time the excessive water has caused unnecessary damage to the building.
- b) The front door is inadequate inasmuch as the construction of the door is not up to standard and the lock on the door is fragile.
- c) The inner door was reported as failing to catch in the lock some months ago, the caretaker was advised and agreed he would attend to it. No action has been taken and the Library are left with a situation where a fifteen month old child can open the door with ease. No doubt the Councillors will appreciate this requires attention.
- d) The building requires decorating both exterior and interior as previously advised. Numerous visitors have enquired why this work has not been carried out given it is a Community facility. They are advised the cost is to be shared between the school and the parish council with Ms Kay, Chair of the Parish Council taking responsibility for the negotiations on this matter, but to date no action has been forthcoming.

The Library has proved very successful over the past months with numbers of members increasing rather than declining as is the case with most library facilities. Our Library Facebook page is followed by members who seem to enjoy the content, we try to keep the members up to date as to the operation of the Library, involving our members in every aspect. The Babies and Books has proved successful, evidence of which can be viewed on the Library Facebook page this week, with mums and babies enjoying the books. The impact of the Library is far greater than many groups in the community serving some 500 members of the Community, larger than the sports groups, operated purely by Volunteers, a factor not missed by the majority of the Community.

Mrs. M. Crane  
Waterbeach Independent Library

Item 12 - Accounts for payment

Inv Date	Invoice	Reference	Cheque No	Code	Description	Total	Bank line
01/11/13	Chris Baward	17/240406	105106	6030	Delivery charge for ECB buffer	20.00	
01/11/13	Quarterm		105107	7004	Surv Jackets and T-shirts	177.32	
05/11/13	Marathon Mart	537/619	105108	6030	Oil seals and nuts	119.98	
06/11/13	Redgore	02426000562	105109	6030	Crossing and bolts	216.47	
1/11/13	Redgore	02426116782	105100	6030	Nuts, washers, washers	33.82	
1/11/13	Redgore	02426107193	105100	6030	Threaded rod	5.82	
2/11/13	Oil Truck Ltd	131463	105110	6030	Chargest trailer	1,397.00	
1/11/13	Acton Warehouse UK Limited the Fawcetts	11151/91	00	6034	Fuel (Franchise Card)	120.50	
1/11/13	ESPO	1163189	105111	7104	Office files and bins	13.14	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6011	10er tissue end dispenser	7.62	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	7250	First aid supplies and hazard tape	95.74	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6010	10Ll drums	62.40	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6010	Galvalume sacks	78.12	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6027	Shovel etc.	18.90	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6035	Office floor	13.20	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6030	Seamless 400 Sockets	29.41	
1/11/13	ESPO	1196112	105111	6031	Ordn etc.	50.10	
2/11/13	ESPO	1200642	105111	7250	Sissors	2.84	
2/11/13	ESPO	1200642	105111	6030	Snow Scoop handle	0.00	
2/11/13	ESPO	1200411	105111	6030	Weatherstriper	30.60	
02/12/13	LP Jones		105112	6030	Door drive	10.00	
2/11/13	Supplm Team	632/616	105112	7104	Postage	98.18	
2/11/13	Jagard Builders Ltd	885	105113	6010	Mix cartridges	51.53	
1/11/13	Jagard Projects Ltd	887	105114	6180	New slabs and self-cure to gate	120.00	
1/11/13	Macaw	1940331	105115	6030	Security steel door garden's store	882.60	
05/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	6031	Cables	3.90	
05/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	6033	Washers	0.42	
05/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	7250	Shovel Shovel	12.32	
05/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	VA1	VA1	6.15	
1/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	6030	Padlock	5.12	
05/11/13	Macaw	1052782	105116	6031	Aluminium bars	11.60	
1/11/13	Sherrif Armady	611/1436	105117	6061	Washing	360.10	
2/11/13	Marpower Service	73356543	105118	7001	temporary worker	66.66	
2/11/13	Marpower Service	7296106	105118	7001	temporary worker	607.23	
1/11/13	Marpower Service	7330540	105118	7001	temporary worker	130.01	
1/11/13	Marpower Service	7318607	105118	7001	temporary worker	160.42	
2/11/13	Marpower Service	7322717	105118	7001	temporary worker	173.76	
1/11/13	Robert Frison (Plywell)	Millage	105119	7002	Adjoining mending	13.68	
1/11/13	Marisa Frison	1002	105120	6030	Sawdust	260.00	
2/11/13	Overseasworld.co.uk	1803 pre-payment	105187	6030	Sawdust for mower	120.00	
1/11/13	E-On	HF260426	00	6032	Electricity - Village Green	-13.10	
2/11/13	E-On	HF18082620	00	6032	Electricity - Village Green	-8.96	
1/11/13	E-On	HF49102645	00	6032	Electricity - Village Green	30.10	
1/11/13	E-On	HF49102645	00	6032	Electricity - Village Green	264.54	
1/11/13	E-On	HF49102645	00	6032	Electricity - New Pavilion	261.24	
1/11/13	E-On	HF49102645	00	6032	Electricity - Dismantling Stone	178.97	
01/12/13	B-Orn	Debitcard	105182	7001	Overnight - Seamus & Wynne	190.00	
2/11/13	D Hall and Co	40506	105183	6660	Road parking for car park	522.60	
3/11/13	Post Office Ltd (PAYE)	November 2013	103184-103186	7001	Overnight - Seamus & Wynne	3,356.56	
3/11/13	Post Office Ltd (PAYE)	PAYE October 2013	105187	7001	Overnight - Seamus & Wynne	461.52	
3/11/13	OCC (Leam County Council)	Revisions - October 2013	105188	7001	Overnight - Seamus & Wynne	827.37	
November Total						12,768.32	

[and month = 3090.37