

Waterbeach Parish Council

Setting the precept for 2021-2022

In 2020-2021 we set a precept that should have intentionally reduced our general reserves by £88,347. However, because our income is forecast to be £17,206 more than budget and our expenditure is forecast to be £75,350 less than budget, we are forecast to finish 2020-2021 with a surplus of £4,058.

The budget you have been presented with for 2021-2022 has a deficit of £91,250, assuming the precept remains unchanged.

Last year the Council agreed that budgeting for a deficit was appropriate since our general reserves are high. Because of the unusual nature of 2020-2021, we forecast that our reserves will be higher still. I should thus like to suggest that we set a precept that freezes our Band D Council tax at the 2020-2021 level of £84. Because our Council Tax Base for 2021-2022 has dropped slightly this will lead to a small decrease in precept from £168,470 to £168,092 and hence to a slightly higher overall deficit for the year of £91,628.

As always I have compared our Band D Council tax with that of a number of neighbouring South Cambs parishes. Here is the table showing 2020-2021 Band D for the usual selection.

Parish	Band D
Cottenham	121.98
Histon / Impington	109.50
Horningsea	102.05
Waterbeach	84.00
Fen Ditton	77.47
Milton	74.60
Landbeach	65.09

We are in the middle of our neighbours as usual and right on the third quartile boundary of all parish councils in South Cambridgeshire that raise a Council tax.

Obviously, we cannot continue to budget for a deficit but for this coming year, when so many households have suffered a drop in income, I believe that we should set an example by freezing our part of the Council Tax.

Michael Williamson – 12 January, 2021