

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY JANUARY 11TH 2022

ITEM NO: 15 – Consideration of the 2022/23 Precept request to NFDC

At the December 14th 2021 meeting (agenda item 14 – minute 220/21) I presented to the Council, on behalf of the Finance Advisory Committee, a suggested spending budget for 2022/23 of £24,615. This budget was approved by the Council as presented.

The funding requirement of £24,615, if covered fully by precept, would mean an increase in the Parish Council Precept for 2022/23 of £1,255 over the Precept set for 2021/22.

NFDC have supplied to us the 2022/23 “Tax Base” for the Parish of Copythorne - which was approved by them on December 1st 2021 - which is the equivalent of 1223.1 Band D properties (an increase of 2.1 Band D properties over 2021/22).

The £1,255 increase equates to an extra 99p per annum (26p pa in 2021/22) for a Band D property or roughly 55p per annum per registered elector.

At the lowest end a “Band A” property would pay 67% of this increase (66p per annum), at the highest end a “Band H” property would pay 200% of this increase (£1.98 per annum).

It remains the case that no Government cap applies currently on Town/Parish Council percentage increases. There is no guarantee that this will continue and for Councils such as Copythorne who start from a very low Precept value, in part due to historical decision making in respect of past Precept calculations, any cap could make it very difficult for the Council to raise funding to cover projects and costs in the future, as our administration costs would progressively rise, consuming the majority of the budget, leaving no funds for any development activity.

Last year, the Council approved a budget of £23,360 all of which was covered by Precept.

The Council’s General Reserves as at December 31st 2021 stood at £10,761. Our Internal Auditor suggests for a council of our size General Reserves should be maintained at between 33% - 50% of the annual budget. Currently ours stand near the middle of this recommended range at 44% of the proposed 2022/23 Budget. Therefore, as Responsible Financial Officer of the Council, I do not feel that any of the approved 2022/23 Budget should be covered by a transfer from Reserves.

Recommendation

That Council approves the submission to NFDC of a 2022/23 Precept request of £24,615.

David Rigby, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
January 4th 2021