

Draft Budget Estimates 2018-19 and Medium Term Financial Plan Consultation

Cirencester Town Council (CTC) is consulting on its budget estimates for 2018/19 and the impact that this will have on its medium term financial plan.

Whilst we recognise that all local government is faced with financial challenges, the Town Council does not receive direct funding from central government or any funding from business rates raised locally.

In addition, changes to the council tax system have resulted in a financial gap for town and parish councils. For Cirencester this equated to a real terms financial gap of over £42k. Central government recognised this unintended consequence of changing the tax system and provided council tax support grant funding through the district council along with other funding streams such as the new homes bonus, which are intended to support town and parish communities.

Whilst initially Cotswold District Council passed on a large proportion of this funding, it only passed on £27k in 2017/18 and will only pass on £14k in 2018/19.

Despite these challenges and other financial pressures outside the direct control of the Town Council, CTC is seeking to minimise the increase in council tax to just 2.5%; this includes invest to save projects which could further minimise the need to increase local council tax in future years.

The Town Council takes its financial responsibilities seriously and does not solely rely on raising local council tax and funds its total expenditure from other sources such as investment income, providing management support services to a charitable trust, a grounds maintenance service at the Amphitheatre, allotment rents, markets and sport/recreation – this income totals around £130k per annum. The Town Council is also using its general reserves as far as is possible.

In terms of our expenditure, 30% goes towards corporate costs such as office administration and management, as well as leasing operational buildings and meeting rooms, 10% is allocated to specific projects and earmarked reserves and 60% of expenditure goes directly towards delivering estates and community services.

In 2018/19, the Town Council is considering having an event and economic development fund to support local retailers and businesses, a Town Crier, launching the Joe Watson Arboricultural Bursary and investing in new CCTV infrastructure alongside providing an enhanced monitoring service directly through Gloucestershire Constabulary. This partnership with the police will mean that the Town Council can not only improve community safety provision but save money in future years, which could be used towards minimising the increase in council tax at the same time as being able to continue and potentially extend vital support in meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of the town.

The Town Council also recognises the financial pressures that many in our community are facing on a day to day basis; CTC provides financial support to a wide range of local organisations who are seeking to help those in real need.

In balancing this important support alongside being understanding of the wider financial pressures faced by many in our community, it is intended to keep the proposed increase in council tax for 2018/19 at around 5 pence per week.

The Town Council will formally consider the budget estimates for 2018/19, as well as setting its part of the local council tax, at its meeting on Tuesday 23rd January at 7pm, Bingham House, Dyer Street.

In the mean time we would welcome comments from the public, residents, businesses and organisations on the Town Council's proposals for expenditure in 2018/19 and its medium term financial plan which can be found on-line at www.cirencester.gov.uk or through the Local Information Centre at Bingham House, Dyer Street.

You can contact the Town Council in the following ways:

(Freepost RTAL UUZG TEBY)
Bingham House
1 Dyer Street
Cirencester
GL7 2PP

E-mail info@cirencester.gov.uk

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Cirencester-Town-Council-157136484326847>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/Cirentc>

Instagram <http://instagram.com/cirencestertowncouncil>

Local Information Centre, Bingham House: Opening Hours Monday to Friday 9am - 4.30pm

