

**Meeting: Full Council**

**Date: 28th November 2023**

**Author: Town Clerk**

**Item For Consideration: Budget and Precept for 2024 to 2025**

To consider a draft budget following the discussion at the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

## **1.0 Background Information**

### **1.1 Young People Provision**

At the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November the council gave a clear steer that it would want to support the children and young people in the town via supporting the organisations that provide opportunities to engage with a range of young people. In turn this would help eradicate some of the issues around safety and help create a programme of social renewal in Kingswood. The following were mentioned as potential projects: Youth centre-based activities, youth workers supporting schools, additional youth leadership to support those with learning disabilities, and those who are vulnerable, to cover school holiday periods, and develop a youth café space.

Suggested sum: £360,000

### **1.2 Events**

In addition to supporting the young people, the council wanted to create a sense of pride in the town, by proposing that investment is made in offering a range of events throughout the year, from parades, car boot sales to family fun days and a Christmas lights event.

Suggested sum: £55,000

### **1.3 Christmas Lights**

It was proposed that the council takes on the costs associated with the provision of Christmas lights. Suggested sum: £15,000

### **1.4 Library Support**

The council also identified that financial support to the library will reduce some of its pressures, to continue to deliver more outreach work in schools, greater access for the elderly and schools, as well as continue to offer the service as a Warm Space. Suggested sum: £30,000 per year for a period of three years.

### **1.5 Community Grant Scheme**

The council recognised the valuable contribution made by community groups and suggested that a grant fund would enable the council to help local groups realise their ambitions and make an impact on the local residents. Suggested sum: £50,000

### **1.6 Greening of the High Street**

Working with the Friends of Kingswood Park, to provide floral displays across Kingswood Town Centre. Suggested Sum: £12,000

### **1.7 Additional staff**

In order to deliver an events programme, it was suggested that an Events Officer be employed on a fixed term basis.

In addition, it was suggested that the council put aside funds that either enable the employment of a Town Warden or similar to keep the town tidy, or to engage others (contractors or top up to SGC) for a similar service. Details of either position were not discussed in detail, but it was requested that a sum be incorporated into the budget.

As the workload increases and more committees are created, it might be necessary to employ some additional support in the form of a part time administrator or finance officer initially. The figure below includes costs for 3 posts (pension and NI, as well as IT and equipment). Suggested sum: £114,400

### **1.8 Venue provision**

The council is currently without a building but will aspire to have a community building in the future and a reserve is suggested that would enable the council to make a credible bid for any building that might become available in the future. Suggested sum: £150,000

### **1.9 Operating Cost**

If the council were to increase the precept and employ more staff then there is a knock on effect to some budget lines. The Clerk had previously recommended a budget of approximately £100,000 but a number of office costs will increase in line with having more staff. Suggested sum: £115,080

### **1.10 General and Earmarked Reserves**

An underspend (of approximately £70,000) in the current year will provide the basis for a general reserve, but the council will need to ensure that it also earmarks funds to go into the reserve for unseen costs and events, as well as elections. To be determined.

## **2.0 Summary of the above proposals**

<b>Proposed Projects and budget for 2024 to 2025</b>		
		<b>Proposal</b>
Youth Services		£360,000.00
Events		£55,000.00
Christmas Lights		£15,000.00
Support to the Library		£30,000.00
Community Grants Scheme		£50,000.00
Greening of the High Street		£12,000.00
Events Officer and oncosts		£50,600.00
Parish Steward and on costs		£39,800.00
Part time Admin/Finance support		£24,000.00
Community Building reserve		£150,000.00
Operating costs		£115,080.00
General Reserves Top Up		
<b>Total</b>		<b>£901,480.00</b>

### **2.1 Impact on the Individual Band D Household**

The current council tax levied on a Band D household is £14.99 per annum Based on a likely tax base of 8,359, this would set the council tax on the average Band D household of £107.84 per annum or £8.89 per month. If the council wishes to increase any of the about amounts, or reduce them, then this council tax base figure (8359) is used as the multiplier. A

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sum for increasing general reserves has not been included in the above figure. If £100,000 was put into reserves this would increase the above budget to £1001,480 and to £119.81 per Band D household per year and £9.98 per month.

## 2.2 A summary of the operational budget it listed below:

Code	Item	2023 to 2024		Projected Underspent at year end	2024 to 2025
		Budget for current year	Forecast to year end		Draft Budget
200	<b>Employee Costs (Clerk only)</b>				
4000	Salary - Clerk /RFO	£36,667	£20,000	£16,667	£48,000
4020	Employer Pension contribution	£9,167	£4,000	£5,167	£9,600
4025	Employers National Insurance	£4,000	£2,200	£1,800	£5,280
4055	Expenses	£916	£1,000	-£84	£2,500
4060	Payroll Costs: Set-up	£200	£200	£0	£0
4065	Payroll Costs: on-going	£500	£500	£0	£800
4070	Avon Pension Fund set-up costs	£2,300	£2,300	£0	£0
	<b>Employee Costs Total</b>	<b>£53,750</b>	<b>£30,200</b>	<b>£23,550</b>	<b>£66,180</b>
300	<b>Office Costs</b>				
4100	Set-up Costs	£2,500	£1,500	£1,000	£1,500
4105	IT Software, Consumables, Sup	£2,000	£2,000	£0	£2,000
4110	Website	£1,000	£1,075	-£75	£300
4115	Website Annual costs	£500	£300	£200	£300
4120	Communication	£1,200	£500	£700	£4,800
4125	Postage, Freight & Courier	£100	£50	£50	£150
4130	Office Space Rent	£7,500	£0	£7,500	£7,500
4135	Printer Cost	£600	£300	£300	£500
4140	Printing Cost	£500	£100	£400	£400
4145	Insurance	£1,600	£192	£1,408	£1,200
	<b>Office Costs Total</b>	<b>£17,500</b>	<b>£6,017</b>	<b>£11,483</b>	<b>£18,650</b>
400	<b>Administration/Governance</b>				
4200	Election Costs: Initial	£34,600	£1,050	£33,550	£0
	Election costs: Future (into EMRs)	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
4210	Meeting Room costs	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£2,750
4215	Councillor Expenses	£500	£0	£500	£500
4220	New Councillor Packs	£500	£0	£0	£0
	<b>Governance Total</b>	<b>£36,600</b>	<b>£2,050</b>	<b>£35,050</b>	<b>£13,250</b>
500	<b>Professional Fees</b>				
4300	Subscription membership	£1,300	£1,000	£300	£3,800
4305	Audit & Accountancy Fees	£2,000	£1,500	£500	£1,400
4310	Staff/Councillor Training	£1,000	£750	£250	£1,800
4315	Cont - SGC Parish set up costs	£5,000	£2,800	£2,200	£0
4320	Locum Staff set up	£0	£6,160	-£6,160	£0
	<b>Professional Fees Total</b>	<b>£9,300</b>	<b>£12,510</b>	<b>-£2,910</b>	<b>£7,000</b>
600	<b>Other Expenditure</b>				
4400	Events Kit, printing, advertising etc	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£5,000
4405	Miscellaneous	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£0
4415	Contingency	£5,958	£2,500	£3,458	£5,000
	<b>Other Expenditure Total</b>	<b>£7,958</b>	<b>£4,500</b>	<b>£5,458</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£125,108</b>	<b>£55,277</b>	<b>£69,831</b>	<b>£115,080</b>

### **3.0 Comparisons**

Comparisons to other parishes in the South Gloucestershire Area in the current year are below:

Ranking	Parish	Council Tax Base	Precept
33	Sodbury	2,199	£291,411
34	Patchway	2,332	£540,271
35	Almondsbury	2,364	£270,040
36	Dodington	2,384	£309,865
37	Hanham Abbots	2,384	£82,325
38	Frampton Cotterell	2,617	£381,303
39	Filton	3,154	£986,694
40	Bitton	3,348	£121,632
41	Staple Hill & Mangotsfield	4,003	£106,800
42	Winterbourne	4,168	£189,050
43	Stoke Gifford	4,442	£345,000
44	Downend and Bromley Heath	4,632	£304,500
45	Oldland	4,938	£197,567
46	Thornbury	5,754	£898,894
47	Emersons Green	6,956	£306,000
48	Bradley Stoke	6,979	£816,125
49	Yate	8,307	£1,668,251
50	Kingswood	8,345	£125,100

### **4.0 Recommendation**

8.1 For councillors to have a discussion and resolve to agree the proposed budget

Or

8.2 For Councillors to have a discussion and agree to amend the proposed budget and delegate authority to the Clerk to amend the budget for consideration at the meeting in January 2024.