

Finance: Preparing a Budget for 2020-21

The Council's usual practice has been that a draft budget has been prepared by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Clerk. The Council is invited to consider whether to prepare the draft budget for 2020-21 in this way.

Before a sound draft budget can be properly agreed, the Council should probably therefore:

- Review the Council's Risk Assessment to ensure it has identified any risks that require additional expenditure in 2020-21 for their elimination or mitigation
- Review the Council's Indicative Capital Programme
- Identify any new projects the Council may wish to undertake in 2020-21 that might give rise to significant expenditure
- Review burial ground fees, as these are usually a significant source of income
- Review the salary and conditions of service of the Clerk (see Standing Order 18.1)
- Receive and approve an up-to-date bank reconciliation
- Review and, if necessary, revise the current year budget in the light of an up-to-date monitoring report
- Review the Financial Regulations.

I believe these steps should probably satisfy our auditors that the Council is properly managing the Council's finances.

I recommend that initial recommendations on all these matters be made to the Council's December 2019 meeting, enabling final decisions to be taken at the January 2020 meeting which is the last one at which the 2020-21 precept can be agreed before VoWHDC's likely deadline.

The 2020-21 budget should be presented to the Council in the form required by law rather than in the form used for many years, showing the precept as a balancing figure.

Geoffrey Ferres
Parish Clerk
Friday 17th October 2019