

Longtown GPC

Ward Member Report - January 2017

2017/18 Budget Update

The provisional financial settlement announced on 15th December 2016 confirmed the following:

- Confirmation of the 2% council tax referendum principle
- Confirmation of an additional 2% adult social care precept and ability to raise the adult social care precept to 3% in 2017-18 and 2018-19 but no more than 6% over the next three years
- Reduction in the number of payment years for the new homes bonus from 6 years to 5 years in 2017/18 and to 4 years in 2018/19. Bonus will also only be paid above a 0.4% housing growth baseline.
- Savings from the new homes bonus to be allocated to local authorities through an adult social care support grant

The net result of these changes is:

A reduction in the New Homes Bonus	(£1,065K)
New Adult Social Care Support Grant	£885K

Cabinet will agree the recommendation to Council on Thursday 19th January, but I anticipate the following:

- (a) the council tax base of 67,937.91 band D equivalents;
- (b) an increase in council tax in 2017/18 of 1.9%;
- (c) an additional precept in respect of adult social care costs of 2.0% applied to council tax in 2017/18.

The impact of the above recommendations will result in a total council tax increase of 3.9%; increasing the band D charge from £1,324.83 to £1,376.50 for Herefordshire Council in 2017/18.

Council will discuss and agree the budget in February and the Council Tax (including precepts) in March 2017.

Broadband

A new green cabinet has been installed and commissioned in Lower Maescoed. I am still trying to resolve issues with a further new cabinet on Michaelchurch Road, which I hope will come into service in Spring 2017.

Further contracts will be let with Gigaclear, a fibre to the premise network provider, to provide further coverage across South Herefordshire – details to follow.

Hereford Car Park Tariffs

The off street car park tariffs in Hereford have been reviewed and a new schedule of payments will come into effect from February 2017.

Maylords Orchard will change from a pay on exit facility to a pay and display car park. This is more cost effective and will be easier for disabled users who currently have to use the Shopmobility office for ticket validation.

Most charges remain the same with some reductions.

Hereford Library

Hereford Library will reopen on Tuesday 31 January 2017 following the phase one completion of building work at Broad Street. Further work on the development of the building will follow.

Customers can look forward to a refreshed ground floor interior, including new meeting rooms and accessible public toilets. The county library will also welcome WISH (Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire) which will operate from the main library when it reopens.

The temporary library at Hereford Town Hall will close on Saturday 21 January to enable the move back to Broad Street. Customers can use the Town Hall drop box to return library items during the period of closure.

Three Elms housing development planning application - Hereford Statement from Welsh Water's re planned £21 million investment

Welsh Water is proud of its record in supporting investment in the local area and also its efforts to support sustainable growth for the local economy. As a statutory consultee in the planning process, we always carefully consider every planning application with a view to supporting local economic development. This is done alongside our ongoing commitment to provide the most essential of public services through maintaining and protecting local water and wastewater networks.

Our process in considering planning applications always includes the potential impact on our infrastructure in the local area – including the local environment, the service we provide for customers or any possible increased risk to homes and businesses in the area.

We will always do everything we can to support sustainable growth. Over the last two years, we have invested nearly **£5 million** in our services in Hereford to help improve the resilience of the water and wastewater networks. We plan to invest more than **£21 million** over the next 2 years which will enable us to help support developments such as the Three Elms project as well as future growth planned for the area.

We also work with stakeholders, such as local businesses, to address any concerns they may have around the potential impact of any proposed development on the services we currently provide. To that end, we will liaise with Heineken, so that we can understand their requirements in the area, and if requested, help them with their water supplies.