

Southam Town Council Newsletter

PRECEPT EDITION 2021

www.southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk



PRECEPT MEETING

At its meeting on 14 January, Southam Town Council resolved to set a 2021/2022 expenditure budget of £265,339 as detailed below, offset by income of £6,000. There is no longer a Council Tax Reduction Grant. The Town Council's share of the Council Tax for a Band D property will be £88.22 for the year, an increase of £3.55 (or 4.19%) on the current year.

TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/2022		£
GENERAL		£
MANAGEMENT		
Contribution to Grange Hall utilities	1,456	
Audit Fee	1,200	
Insurance	3,550	
Legal Fees & Services	4,000	
Neighbourhood Plan	*ER	
Telephone & Broadband	1,200	
Postage	*ER	
Office	2,000	
Bank Charges	*ER	
Intruder Alarm	417	
Web Site Hosting	1,179	
IT	7,000	
Total Management	22,002	
SALARIES & EXPENSES		
Total Salaries (incl costs)	100,481	
Travelling expenses (Cllrs & Staff)	*ER	
Total Salaries & Expenses	100,481	
INFORMATION		
Newsletter	841	
Stationery	*ER	
Membership Associations	2,015	
Conference/Training Fees	2,000	
Advertising	1,153	
Total Information	6,009	
MAYORAL		
Allowance	1,126	
Regalia	200	
Total Mayoral	1,326	
MISCELLANEOUS		
Town Centre Development	*ER	
Elections	*ER	
Total Miscellaneous	*ER	
TOTAL GENERAL	129,819	
RECREATION & AMENITIES		
Southam Stories	6,100	
Trees	8,000	
Holywell	*ER	
Salt/Litter/Dog Bins	*ER	
Flying Fields Community Hall	15,000	
Mop Fair	1,000	
CCTV	5,493	
Hire of portable toilets	*ER	
Footpaths Amenity Spaces	2,360	
Total Recreation & Amenities	37,953	
MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS		
Repairs/Inspections/Replacements	12,000	
Darcy Flood Alarm Maintenance	675	
Grounds Maintenance Services	7,536	
Roundabout Maintenance	10,000	
War Memorial	*ER	
Total Maintenance & Repairs	30,211	
TOTAL RECREATION & AMENITIES AND MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS	68,164	
Other		
The Grange Hall		
Capital Expenditure	1,000	
Total Grange Hall	1,000	
Street Lighting		
Maintenance	1,250	
Supply of Electricity	7,500	
Columns & Repairs	25,000	
Total Street Lighting	33,750	
Grass Cutting		
Grass cutting	15,542	
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COMMUNITY GRANTS		
Voluntary Transport Scheme	2,000	
Section 137 Grants	9,891	
CAB	*ER	
Southam Youth Services	*ER	
Southam Christmas Lights	2,173	
Southam-in-Bloom	3,000	
Total Community Grants	17,064	
TOTAL OTHER	67,356	
GRAND TOTAL	265,339	

*ER = Earmarked Reserves



The next Town Council meeting will take place virtually at 7.30pm on **Thursday 25 February 2021**. Contact the Clerk for joining instructions if you wish to attend (details overleaf)

Commentary on 2021/22 Precept (Cllr Graham Foster)

The expenditure that the Town Council makes on behalf of residents is funded mostly by the precept – a small charge that towns are able to make that is added to the Council Tax. Each year we assess and set a budget for the coming year in order to meet our obligations and our objectives.

This year the Town Council has agreed to increase its share of the overall Council Tax bill by £3.55 for a Band D property. This is a slightly larger increase than usual and it would be too easy to say it's because of the pandemic. It's not. Here are some of the main differences from past years.

Southam's growth has accelerated in the past few years and with the increased population comes increased workload for the hard pressed staff, who support us all as residents. This year has been a tipping point and the Council took the decision that we need to recruit another part time person. This will be the first time that the staffing has changed in at least 25 years.

As County and District budgets come under more pressure, some of the jobs they would normally do are not getting done. One example is the maintenance of the roundabouts surrounding the town. We want Southam to be an attractive place to live, work and shop and many residents have commented on the scruffy, overgrown state of the roundabouts. We have added a budget line to tackle them starting this coming year.

Equally it is important that the Town put money to one side to cover the future replacement of play equipment across the Town as well as in Recreation Ground. This year's budget starts to build this type of fund.

The Town Council also has a major project underway to transfer its remaining streetlights to the County Council. For historic reasons, we still meet the cost of electricity and maintenance for some (not all) of Southam's street lighting and we are working to reduce this to zero and save this money in the future. To do this we need to pay to upgrade the lights before the County Council will take them. Although this is a substantial cost now, it has a real and significant payback for all of us.

Don't forget that the Town Council always sets aside money to grant to community groups that can show a need in order to enrich community life in the town. We would welcome new applications for this fund from community groups to support people in Southam.

There tends to be a lot of discussion to come up with a budget that is the right balance between increasing the burden on the council tax payer and getting done what needs to be done. The Town Council believes that the budget we have set, displayed here, is the right one for Southam.

CLIP & COLLECT GARDEN WASTE SERVICE

Sign up before 28 February 2021 for an early bird charge of £35 per green bin - no subscription, no emptying! The new service starts on 1 April 2021.

FREE food waste caddies on request.

Tel: 01789 260628

Email: streetscene@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Visit: www.stratford.gov.uk/gardenwaste

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Sadly, this service is still suspended due to Covid but we will reopen as soon as we can safely do so!

A BIG 'THANK YOU'

to everyone involved in the **Christmas Lights** display in the town. They certainly lifted our spirits during these difficult times as did the Christmas Trail—we are hoping that this will become an annual event too!

DON'T FORGET : CENSUS 2021 TAKES PLACE IN MARCH.

**census
2021**

SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MAYOR: Councillor Graham Foster

TOWN CLERK: Mrs D Carro

COVID-19 MEANS THAT THE COUNCIL OFFICE IS STILL CLOSED TO VISITORS. PLEASE USE EITHER PHONE OR EMAIL TO CONTACT THE TOWN COUNCIL OR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

(Tel: 01926 814004) email: clerk@southamcouncil-warks.gov.uk

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Cllr Lee Ellard

THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT ON REQUEST