

decoration. The Parish Council will seek a contribution from the Village Hall Management Committee towards the cost of the works.

WHY THE INCREASE NOW?

In future, it is possible that if a Parish/Town Council needs to raise its precept higher than 2%, that a referendum would need to be held prior to implementing such an increase. The cost of a referendum would be considerable, and would have to be paid for by the residents of the parish. This could be in the region of £3,000 - 5,000. As the Village Hall needs improvement now, it is prudent to raise the charge now rather than incur the cost of a referendum at a later date.

If you have any questions about the charge for 2017/18 you are welcome to attend any of the monthly Parish Council meetings.



Cheswick Green Parish Council

www.cheswickgreen-pc.gov.uk

Published by CGPC, Cheswick Green Village Hall, Cheswick Way, Cheswick Green, Solihull, B90 4JA

Newsletter February 2017

Serving the residents of
Cheswick Green and Illshaw Heath



CHESWICK GREEN PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT CHARGE

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The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide residents with information on how the precept is spent and the reasons why an increase in next year's precept is necessary.

Every Parish/Town Council in the Borough is responsible for setting its own precept charge. This charge is added to the Council Tax levied by Solihull MBC. The precept charge reflects the budget set by the Parish Council and is converted into an annual amount payable per property. The amount payable by each household will vary according to which property band your house is placed in. Your tax band is shown on your Council Tax bill. There are 8 property bands which are determined by the Valuation Office Agency. For comparison purposes throughout the country a Band D property is always used.

Details of the annual precept charge over the last few years for Cheswick Green Parish Council are shown below: -

| Financial Year | Charge | Increase/decrease | Amount payable at Band D per property | Increase/decrease per property in £ per year | Increase/decrease per property in % per year |
|----------------|---------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 2012/13 | £45,000 | | | | |
| 2013/14 | £43,410 | -£1,590 | £47.55 | +£1.30 | 2.8% |
| 2014/15 | £43,750 | +£340 | £47.55 | £0.00 | 0.0% |
| 2015/16 | £44,554 | +£804 | £47.55 | £0.00 | 0.0% |
| 2016/17 | £49,026 | +£4,472 | £52.54 | +£4.99 | 10.5% |
| 2017/18 | £69,456 | +£20,430 | £73.65 | +£21.11 | 41.7% |

As can be seen from the table, there was an increase of £1.30 per household from 2012/13 to 2013/14 and then no increases for the following 2 years. In 2016/17 the charge was increased by £4,472 which meant an increase of £4.99 per property per year (just over 9 pence per week). This increase was required to provide for anticipated consultants fees, arising from the many planning applications from housing developers.

The budgets for the Parish Council for the last 2 years together with the proposed budget for 2017/18, are shown below:

| Description of spend | Budget 2015/16 | Budget 2016/17 | Proposed Budget 2017/18 |
|--|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Administration costs | 25,400 | 25,100 | 28,150 |
| Grounds Maintenance, litter pick, car park, trees, Christmas lights etc. | 15,200 | 18,900 | 18,200 |
| Newsletter/stationery/ website | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,950 |
| Election costs | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Consultants fees | 10,000 | 12,000 | 7,000 |
| Village Hall works | 0 | 0 | 10,000 |
| Contribution to reserves | 0 | 0 | 2,700 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | 54,000 | 59,400 | 70,000 |
| Use of Reserves | 9,446 | 56,074 | 0 |
| Charge | 44,554 | 49,026 | 69,456 |
| Support grant | 1220 | 974 | 544 |

Notes to the budget:

Administration costs - this covers the cost of all admin requirements.

Grounds maintenance - this covers the Recreation Ground, The Mount, the fields between Saxon Wood Rd and Snowhill Drive, the Village Green and the grass at corner of Saxon Wood Road and Boscobel Rd. Litter picking around Village Hall/parts of the car park, work on trees and the Christmas lights, etc.

Election costs - these arise when an election is required. No costs have been incurred for several years.

Consultants fees – to cover the cost for any professional undertakings.

THE 2017/18 CHARGE:

The proposed charge is £69,456, a total increase of £20,430, which will mean an increase of £21.11 per property annually. (41 pence per week per household)

The Village Hall roof required extensive emergency and essential repair work to the underlying fabric of the roof, at a total cost of over £47,700 including structural engineering fees. The Parish Council had not budgeted for this unforeseen cost and due to being unable to obtain any external funding, it had no alternative than to use reserve funds. The work on the roof was completed ahead of schedule, despite additional unexpected structural problems within the roof, and with a minimum loss of income. At the beginning of this financial year 1st April 2016 reserves were £73,450. Following the use of reserves for the roof repairs and other expenditure the balance of the reserves at year end 31st March 2017 is currently estimated to be £19,000.

Parish/Town Councils are advised to have reserves approximating to 50% of the precept. The Parish Council has taken the decision to recover the amount over a period of time. You will note that within the 2017/18 budget a sum of £2,700 has been included for "contribution to reserves". As houses are occupied in Cheswick Place this will mean that the cost of the precept will be spread over more households and thereby reduce the annual charge to each household within the Parish.

As you may be aware, the Village Hall is in need of renovation and the Parish Council plans to invest in this community asset. You will note that within the 2017/18 budget a sum of £10,000 has been included for "Village Hall works". It is proposed to refurbish the toilets, renew the external doors, improve security and information technology and undertake some minor works including some