



MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

YOUR COUNCIL TAX

The Council Tax you pay helps towards a variety of services. The largest proportion is for those provided by Wiltshire Council - education, roads, car parks, bin collections, social services and planning right across the county. The proportion of your Council Tax (known as the precept) and around 10% of the overall annual bill is for the running of your own Town Council which provides your most local services here in Marlborough. Also collected are the precepts set by Wiltshire Police Authority and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Services.



HOW YOUR TOWN COUNCIL SPENDS YOUR MONEY

Maintenance and management of Town Council-owned assets – Town Hall, various commercial and residential properties, Marlborough Common, The Green, Salisbury Road Recreational Ground, Elcot Lane Playing Fields, Skate Park, Children's Play Areas, The Priory Gardens, Wye House Amenity Gardens, St. Mary's Churchyard, Stonebridge and Coopers Meadows, Allotments, War Memorials, Town Floral Displays, Football Pitches and the Cemeteries as well as more than 1500 trees

Management of public toilets

Management of a CCTV system

Consultation and assessment of all relevant planning applications

Administration of burial records, cemetery space, plaques and memorials

Maintenance and erection of Christmas lights

Event management – Royal Visits, Civic dinners, Christmas Lights Switch-on Event and other community events

Administration of a Small Grants Scheme

Local communication via the website, social media, newsletter and notice boards,

Work towards securing external grant funding and implementing new projects

Information about Wiltshire Council services

Liaison with other external agencies

Civic work around Military links, Remembrance Day Parade, etc

HOW IT'S ALL ORGANISED

Your Town Council has 16 Town Councillors – all volunteers and not paid – who carry out business through Full Council and Committees which meet regularly.

They also represent the Town Council at more than 20 different local organisations. Councillors are supported by a small team of staff members headed up by the Town Clerk.

The Council works with a number of different organisations, supporting various events and initiatives – Marlborough in Bloom, Action for the River Kennet, Chamber of Commerce, Kennet Valley Arts Trust, Richmond Fellowship, Royal British Legion, Transition Marlborough, the Marlborough Brandt Group, Merchants House, the Golf Club, the Tennis Club, Rugby Club, Marlborough Boxing Club, Common Users Group, Marlborough History Society, 4th Military Intelligence Battalion, the Air Training Corp, schools and many more.

TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS

In 2016/17, the Town Council awarded grants to a number of local groups - St John's Ambulance, Phoenix Brass, the Jubilee Centre, Prospect Hospice, Manton Pre-school, Merchant's House Trust, Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust and Revitalise. In recognition that funding is becoming more difficult for community and voluntary groups to obtain and less money is available via Wiltshire Council and government agencies, Town Councillors have decided to retain its budget line of £6,500 for its 2017/18 Small Grants Scheme.

Some of the projects the Town Council will be working on in 2017/18

With the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, production of a Neighbourhood Plan for Marlborough with the neighbouring parishes of Mildenhall, Preshute and Savernake

Following the transfer of public toilets at George Lane, the running of the refurbished facilities and sale of the old toilets at Chantry Lane

Transfer of assets and devolved services from Wiltshire Council, possibly the Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead

Improved play provision at Cooper's Meadow



Pictured: The Mayor at The Jubilee Centre, Prospect Outreach Centre and Manton Pre School

Central government has put in place measures that impact hugely upon the resources of principal authorities such as a Wiltshire Council where a number of savings and cuts have had to be made so that social care services can be properly maintained. There is a knock-on effect to town and parish councils – some services and community assets have been offered to the Town Council to take on. In some cases, important facilities and amenities such as the George Lane public toilets and the Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead would have been closed. More services are also likely to be devolved, for example, grass cutting and litter picking. There is no funding to accompany these services or the various asset transfers being offered to the Town Council.



So, Town Councillors have had some difficult decisions to make – balancing a rise in the precept to make sure that important facilities and services are retained or allowing them to close leading to reduced services for local residents.

Each year, Town Councillors scrutinise budget lines carefully to ensure best value but, there are costs over which there is little or no control – tax, superannuation, national insurance, local government national salary rises, utilities, business rates, etc. The Town Council receives no revenue funding at all from central government and a council tax support grant previously passed on from Wiltshire Council will no longer be paid from 1 April 2017. The Town Council continues to seek external grant funding where it can.



Additional expenditure in 2017/18 includes the refurbishment of the public toilets at George Lane for which a public works loan was taken on from the Public Works Loan Board - a statutory government organisation that lends at preferential rates to local authorities. Making provision for the work around taking on future asset transfers and services (e.g. the Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead), legal fees as well as referendum and by election costs (previously paid by Wiltshire Council).

WHAT ABOUT USE OF GENERAL RESERVES AND SAVINGS?

The Council could have used its reserves to meet costs or keep down the precept but, this could not be sustained year on year. Under audit regulations, general reserves must be kept at a certain level. No increase in the precept would mean Councillors having to consider withdrawing planned projects and not taking on services or assets from Wiltshire Council.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR POCKET IN 2017/18?

| Expenditure | 2016/17 (£) | 2017/18 (£) |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Town Hall, properties & buildings | 163,559 | 192,214 |
| Open spaces, amenities & cemeteries | 251,550 | 280,497 |
| Civic, democratic, planning & administration | 259,487 | 299,002 |
| Total gross expenditure | 674,596 | 771,713 |
| Less | | |
| Income | 162,113 | 170,800 |
| Council tax support funding - Wiltshire Council | 2,669 | 0 |
| Budget requirement (precept) | 509,814 | 600,913 |

To calculate the annual amount to be paid, the precept figure is divided by the number of Band D households in the town (3,289.53). So, £600,913 is divided by the number of Band D households to calculate the Band D annual precept - £182.67 (an increase on the 2016/17 figure of £25.94p or £2.16p a month or 49p a week).

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------|
| The overall annual Council Tax collected by Wiltshire Council for Marlborough Band D households is broken down as: | Wiltshire Council | £1,334.63 |
| | Marlborough Town Council | £182.67 |
| | Wiltshire Police Authority | £170.27 |
| | Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service | £70.59 |
| | | <u>£1,758.16</u> |

The table of Bands A – H sets out what this will mean for all bands of households. The lowest is looking at a rise of £17.29p and the highest at an increase of £51.88p a year.

| Year | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2016/17 | £104.49 | £121.90 | £139.32 | £156.73 | £191.56 | £226.39 | £261.22 | £313.46 |
| 2017/18 | £121.78 | £142.08 | £162.37 | £182.67 | £223.26 | £263.86 | £304.45 | £365.34 |
| Difference for each Band £ | £17.29 | £20.18 | £23.05 | £25.94 | £31.70 | £37.47 | £43.23 | £51.88 |
| % difference for each Band | 16.55% | 16.55% | 16.54% | 16.55% | 16.55% | 16.55% | 16.55% | 16.55% |

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 WILL BE PUBLISHED IN APRIL 2017

Further details can be obtained from the Town Clerk, at Marlborough Town Council,
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