



## **Condover Parish Council: Precept Requirement 2020-21**

At its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019, Condover Parish Council agreed a budget for 2019-20 that reflected increasing on-going liabilities and costs, and included some short-term additional project costs to improve communications and engagement within the Parish. The projected spend required the Parish to draw on reserves. To manage the budget from 2020-21 onwards, the Parish Council resolved to:

- a) Develop a funding strategy, to manage down spend where possible, and to increase receipts through e.g. applying for external grant funding to support especially for community-, heritage- and environment-based projects.
- b) Ensure Parish Council projects each had a business plan with contributions from external funding where applicable.
- c) The Parish Council had not increased its precept for over 10 years but would consider doing so to support the budget for 2020-21.

In order to maintain the core business of the Parish Council and enable delivery of its strategic objectives, during 2019-20 the Finance and Personnel Committee (F&PC) undertook a thorough review of the operation of the Parish Council budget and expenditure in preparation for setting the budget for 2020-21. During the course of this review, the F&PC identified area for economies and savings totalling £16,550, of which £6,000 referred to one-off expenditure in 2019-20, and £5,500 referred to reductions in the Community Grant programme with a further £5,000 being found from operational savings and by spreading costs over longer periods.

The costs incurred by the Parish Council had however significantly increased from 2016/17 onwards. The Parish Council had provided a multi-use games area (MUGA) on Dorrington and had taken responsibility for grass cutting, maintenance and additional insurance of Dorrington Recreation and play grounds. Grass cutting had been extended to include village churchyards. The areas managed by the Parish Council were increasingly subject to damage from flooding or high winds, increasing liability for unscheduled costs. The net cost of village maintenance had risen from £180 in 2016/17 to £7,300 in 2019-20. Shropshire Council grant funding to help meet village maintenance costs had reduced from £3,000 pa in 2016/17 to under £800 pa in 2019-20. The amount required for insurances and legal costs increased by over £2,500 in the same period.

In 2019-20, the Parish Council upgraded and replaced street lighting within the Parish with warm-light LED street lighting. This would provide modern reliable street lighting and contribute to the parish Council's aim of reducing its carbon footprint.

The Parish Council achieved improvements in traffic speed management on the A49 through Dorrington through installation of bigger, more effective vehicle activate speed signs and enhanced on-going monitoring of driver speed and behaviour.

## Precept Requirement 2020-21

At its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Condover Parish Council agreed its budget for 2020/21 and adopted a Financial Plan to underpin and inform the budget. Overall, projected planned expenditure was reduced from £66,050 in 2019-20 to £49,500 in 2020-21. In view of the projected reduction in receipts from grants and community benefit funding, and to reflect increasing costs, to achieve a balanced budget the precept for 2020-21 was set at £43,400. This represented an increase in precept for the first time in many years. It would amount to £5,655 (15%) and enable the Parish Council to present a balanced budget for 2020-21.

## Community Projects planned for 2020-21

The Parish Council will continue to prioritise road condition, traffic and transport within the Parish, aiming to improve road safety for all and achieve better traffic management through our villages. There will also be review of walking and cycling routes in the Parish. This is work carried out with key partners including Shropshire Council, West Mercia Police and Highways England.

The Parish Council is developing a Neighbourhood Plan. Through its consultations with local communities, priorities for project delivery have emerged which support community engagement and opportunities to be active.

The Parish Council plans to begin delivery of these during 2020-21. Access to Condover Woodland Park and the condition of public footpath 47 will be improved. The cricket pavilion in Condover will be extended to provide better facilities for girls as well as boys.

In Dorrington, a programme of tree planting will take place on the recreation ground alongside further works to the Community Garden. It is also planned to improve the play area for younger children.

To better address the needs of more vulnerable residents, the Parish Council aims to become Dementia Friendly and Veteran Aware, working with national and local support and

In addition to weaving environmental awareness and sustainability through all aspects of community life, the Parish Council will promote awareness of and reduction of single-use plastics and will work towards becoming Plastic Free

The Parish Council will work closely with village halls and other partners to add to and extend opportunities for greater community involvement across all age groups in the Parish, to support aspirations and enhance community life.