

## County Council Budget 2017-18

The County Council budget-setting meeting in February decided to set a gross budget of just over £780 million. Set against this is income of £120 million, business rates of £62 million and grants of £336 million, leaving £262 million to be raised through Council Tax. The budget requires no increase in Council Tax and 2% rise in Social Care precept. This was very much in line with the budget consultation which showed that a majority of residents did not support an overall increase in Council Tax of more than 2%.

The Council's decision means that the County Council's portion of Council Tax will rise by about £24 per year for a Band D property with proportionate rises for properties in other Council Tax bands.

The two other amendments, both lost, that proposed Council Tax rises:

- 2% increase in Council Tax and 2% Social Care precept,
- 2% increase in Council Tax and 3% Social Care precept,

would have resulted in the County Council's portion of Council Tax being increased by approximately £48 and £60 respectively for a Band D property.

Social Care budgets all over the country are under great strain, and further financial support for Social Care was announced in the national government's budget in March. Cambridgeshire will get an extra £8.33 million in 2017-18, and a further £6 million in 2018-19. This is over and above what the County Council is precepting

To put the County Council figures in context, a 1% rise in the County Council's portion of Council Tax raises an additional £2.4 million whereas a 1% rise in the District Council's portion of Council Tax raises an additional £70,000.

## National Productivity Fund

In January 2017 Central Government announced the creation of a National Productivity Investment Fund. This fund is for local highway and transport improvements; to reduce congestion, improve maintenance and to improve access to employment and housing.

The Department for Transport (DfT) allocated £2.89 million to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) for 2017-18. The Council has confirmed to DfT that it will spend these monies in the financial year 2017-18 and agreed, by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, to publish on its web site how these funds are to be used.

Four schemes were identified as candidates for the National Productivity Investment Fund in 2017-18, including two in the local area.

### **A10 Foot and Cycleway, Harston** (*minimum of £250,000*)

- A good quality foot and cycle link is now in place from Cambridge to Melbourn alongside the A10, extending for 11 miles. The only gap in this link is the section through the village of Harston;
- The proposal is to widen and resurface the existing narrow shared use path and install new pedestrian crossing facilities at this location. The scheme has been designed, consultation undertaken and the scheme was approved by E&E Committee in 2016.

- The scheme would prevent cyclists in Harston having to use the road, reducing congestion on this road, which carries up to 16,000 vehicles a day at this point.
- Funding of £720,000 is already in place, but further funds are required to deliver the whole scheme, with works due to commence June 2017.

#### **Enhanced Maintenance of Key Routes: A10 (£750,000)**

- There is currently a planned resurfacing scheme from the M11 to Hauxton. The productivity fund would enable us to extend the resurfacing scheme to the London Road, Harston junction. Works would include upgrading and replacing the traffic signals at that junction;
- The scheme would improve access to Cambridge (and the Addenbrookes campus) and therefore access to employment opportunities for many villages south of Cambridge to Royston and beyond. These include the significant new development at Hauxton, which is in the middle of this proposed scheme;
- The improved signals will help manage traffic and accommodate the increased traffic flow along the A10, reducing congestion.

As stated above, the County Council is now committed to delivering these two schemes on the 2017-18 financial year, along with two other schemes in other parts of the county.

#### **Greenways**

Francis Burkitt, Vice Chair of the City Deal Executive Board, has just sent out a letter to parish councils updating them on Greenways. A report on Greenways was produced for the County Council in the Autumn of 2016 and a copy of this report is a separate attachment with this report.

As the Burkitt letter indicates the Greenways issue is at the concept stage, no decisions have been made, and some of the proposals may not be able to be implemented. The letter also states that "it is too early to assess the total project cost, but it might be in the region of £10m+, and we will have to find the money for that in due course. I hope that the Greater Cambridge City Deal's Tranche 2 money (for 2020–2024) will pay for most of it, but we will also be applying to Government schemes."

In case you have not yet received this letter, a copy is attached to this report.

**Tony Orgee and Gail Kenney**  
**County Councillors for Hauxton**