

BUTCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Setting the Precept for 2018/9

February is the month when Parish Councils have to agree their Budget for the following year (ie April to March) and to set the precept (the Parish Council's share of Council Tax) for the financial year 2018/2019.

Our Chair invited residents to attend and discuss the precept with the councilors and have their say in how the council spends the income from the precept. At our public meeting held on 16/01/2018 Councilors voted to increase our precept request from £1900.00 to £2500.00 which is an average monthly cost of £22.80 per household.

The main reasons for the increase are outlined below:

Butcombe has one of the lowest precepts in North Somerset –in total (which simply reflects the fact that we are a very small Parish) but also per elector, as our requirements are modest. In 2017/8, the precept (total take) was £1,900, less than £20 per household. We also get a small contribution from the government (the rate support grant) but this is being phased out.

Over the last few years, demands on Parish Councils have increased, partly through legislation (even the smallest Parish Council must now have a website to publish details of its affairs – we have a small grant to help set this up, but it will cost time and money to run). Also, as is evident from the state of some of our highways, North Somerset Council are really stretched financially and have less and fewer resources to devote to small rural parishes. There may be times when the only way to get things done is for the Parish Council to foot the bill.

Our total income for 2017/8 is less than £2,000.

Our core costs including clerk's salary, expenses, and insurance are £1,400.

We have for some years given grants of £300 each to the Village Hall (partly to cover the cost of using the Hall for Council meetings) and to the Parochial Church Committee (to help with the cost of cutting the grass in the churchyard).

We spend £90 on memberships, including Avon Local Councils Association.

We have new commitments this year of £125 for maintaining the new website and around £50 for supporting the Village Defibrillator. With all these accounted expenses we are looking at an operational deficit of up to £300 per annum.