

1. Thoughts about the budget revision: Nothing unusual about most changes. These are just minor adjustments as the budget set last December meanders through its year. Apart from:
 - a. Staffing changes have inevitably had a significant effect on lines 9, 10, 13 and 26 and indirectly on lines 15, 16, and 18.
 - b. The accounting for the NDP review grant has brought about the changes on lines 27a and 27b.
 - c. I am proposing that any line with expenditure that is not exactly definable (e.g. 27b, 35, 36 and 38) be monitored differently. The agreed limit of the particular line is placed in Earmarked Reserve. As demands come in (e.g. grant allocations or invoices) that amount is transferred from reserves to the appropriate budget line. It means that these lines will not look odd during a quarterly monitoring of the budget compared to actual payments and that at the end of the year money unspent can be properly explained to auditors.

2. Thoughts about draft budget 2025-56 and 2026-27.
 - a. Setting 3-year budgets is now advisory (SALC and JPAG). In my experience no one reviews 3-year budgets retrospectively and therefore their accuracy is unknown. However, your budget revision, and draft budgets for 2025-26 and 2026-27 will represent 3 years of budgets as far as auditors are concerned.
 - b. I have used the Bank of England's inflation tool + informed guesswork to calculate year on year increases. Larger increases for energy and contract renewals (insurance, streetlights, and grounds maintenance).
 - c. Staffing changes: Reduction in Employers NIC but increase in pension contributions

3. Thoughts about the precept:
 - a. The draft budgets based on same size of precept as this year. See the attached worksheets for different options. Each time you can see the effect on a band D home.
NB The tax base has increased this year from 442.26 to 452.72. (No idea where the decimals come from.) This means there will be more homes in the parish paying council tax from April 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andy Parris'.

Saturday, 14 December 2024