

The residents of Southwold have high expectations - and rightly so.

As we are faced with cuts in services provided by District and County Councils, it becomes essential for us to have the financial wherewithal to react when these cuts impact upon our community. Opportunities can arise from seemingly adverse situations and it is important to evaluate the current climate in the light of such.

It is the Town Council's intention to maintain services to the Town. The provision of services is also being dominated by a divestment agenda from other providers, for example the police. The depth, complexity and demands of these agendas are unravelling, week by week, but the implications for the Town Council are becoming hugely significant.

The Town Plan provides an all-encompassing consultation document that Southwold Town Council has embraced, and which it continues to progress. In recent months the Town Council has also developed a long term Strategic Plan, with a particular focus on the next four years. To enable us to implement our Strategy for the future, we require a budget that supports our aspirations and those of the community.

In the past, the Town's assets, alone, have financed the operations of the Town Council, but these assets are, over time, requiring increased maintenance and refurbishment. In addition, Landlords' obligations have become much more onerous, to the point whereby our own property responsibilities are paramount, and simply must be addressed.

Added to this, the core activities of the Town Council, together with the aspirational targets arising from the Town Plan, place further pressure on demands for community-based solutions. We clearly cannot rely on established service providers, alone.

Following approval of a net deficit budget at its meeting on Tuesday, 26 January, Southwold Town Council will now, at least, be able to undertake some of the new projects it has identified.

A budget deficit does, in this instance, have implications and the Town Council further agreed to levy a Precept of £120k, to take effect from 1st April 2016. Based on a Band D rating, this will mean a weekly payment of just over two pounds for every household in the town; a sum that will be collected by the District Council through its Council Tax arrangements.

Signed 

Responsible Finance Officer

27th January 2016

FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE - www.southwoldtown.com