

## **PRECEPT 2017 -18**

A precept is a tax on residences – and a Town Council is a local precepting authority and may issue a precept for each financial year.

Last year the Town Council set a precept of £120,000 which provided a financial platform for a series of projects to be commenced and for the Town Council strategies to be advanced.

The Town Council must exercise functions giving due regard to crime and disorder and in that respect the council has spent a percentage of its precept in matching police authority funding to ensure that there is a dedicated police presence in the town by way of a Police Community Support Officer. Police resources have reduced the PCSO's from 3 people to the 1 that we help fund, and this resource is considered a vital provision for residents and visitors alike. Without such finance, Southwold would not have a police presence in the town.

The council also listened to concerns about the camera system on Mights Bridge and in December financed the installation of an improved camera system that includes Auto Number Plate Recognition.

To date other precept monies have been spent in accordance with budget and have included such things as; play area repairs, new litter bins along the promenade, repair of the cannons on Gun Hill, community shuttle bus service, as well as community events for the Queens 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. The precept has also been used to maintain the memorial seats and carry out grounds maintenance around the town. Council has also been able to assist other voluntary organisations by way of provision of small donations for specific items.

### **Going forward**

The extra funds have, as stated above, provided a platform for projects to continue in 2017 and the Town Council strategies to be implemented such as works on the marshes including the provision of new notice boards. Concerns that the overall image and cleanliness of the town needs to be improved means that some of the finance will also enable council to fund a higher level service from Waveney Norse in response to this.

### **So onto 2017/18**

Policing is a vital asset for the town – for at least the next 12 months the police will still be the only authority that can undertake roadside traffic enforcement - but in 2017 the town council will need to fully finance a PCSO if a presence is to be retained. This will require financing of some £35,000. All the items mentioned above will continue to require finance and projects need to be completed. At the same time council acknowledges that it needs to look into other ways to raise income for various projects and will continue to do so in 2017 and into 2018.

### **Recommendation and decision**

On the proposal of Cllr Horwood, seconded by Cllr Bradbury it was proposed that a Precept of £120,000 be set for the financial year 2017/18. Agreed by a majority.  
Town Council meeting 31.01.17