

# KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

## REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- FC23/020

Committee:-	Finance and Governance Committee
Date:-	19 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Clerk
Report Title:-	Timetable and Consultation Process, 2024-25 Budget
Wards Affected:-	All

### 1. Purpose of Report

To seek agreement to the process for making and consulting on the 2023-24 budget

### 2. Recommendations

That the timetable set out below be approved and that consultation be conducted on the lines set out in the report.

### 3. Process, consultation and engagement

- 3.1. This report proposes a budget consultation process and timetable, substantially based on last year's, but with some variation in detail.
- 3.2. The Council has a duty to provide local taxpayers with details of how money will be spent if the budget exceeds £140,000. Members will need to agree the optimum way to achieve this as part of the process.
- 3.3. The following timetable, for making the budget and the consultation associated with it, is proposed:-

Event	Date	Purpose
Finance and Governance Committee	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Agree principles to inform budget preparation Provisionally identify new or changed areas of expenditure.

Budget preparation period	22nd September to 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Period for members to make proposals for items to be included within budget
Council	25th October 2023	Council to a) consider likely 2023/4 budget out-turn b) consider a draft budget for 24/25 for consultation c) consider any changes to the corporate plan d) agree consultation process for both budget and corporate plan
Consultation period	27 <sup>th</sup> October to 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	Consultation period over 6 weeks – nature to be agreed but to include:-  Drop in consultation event, Newlands centre, Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> and Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> November
Town Meeting	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023	Consultation meeting to gather views from stakeholders as part of the consultation
Council	12 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	Consider consultation responses and agreed broad shape of budget; agree revisions to the corporate plan.
Council	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Agree final budget and precept
NNC deadline	19th January 2023	Deadline for submitting precept request to NNC

3.4. Last year, the Council conducted its consultation through its website, and social media channels, by writing to some stakeholders, and to NNC officers and members, and through a consultation drop in in an empty unit in the Newlands centre over two days. The Town meeting in November was dedicated to the budget consultation. It is proposed keeping all these elements but

- Shortening the questionnaire so that it asks fewer questions
- Running the two Newlands based drop in sessions over Friday and Saturday rather than earlier in the week, and having a gazebo sited in the main concourse near Boots and HMV rather than in an empty shop unit.

Members may also wish to propose other ways of communicating the Council's financial and policy objectives with a wider audience.

#### 4. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

- 4.1. The Council's precept is currently £400,000 and the likely annual turnover is £450,000. The precept amount translates as band D average of £xx per household. This is significantly below the average for parish councils in North Northamptonshire but approximately the same as that levied by Corby and Wellingborough Town Councils, our most similar neighbours.
- 4.2. The budget may be heavily impacted by decision taken by NNC to devolve any services to parish councils during 2024-5 the financial implications of such devolution, and this Council's willingness to assume responsibility for any new services or facilities.

## 5. Policy Implications

The Corporate plan says that the Councils exists :-

- To understand what local people want and aspire to
- To provide services not already delivered by statutory bodies, where there is an unmet need
- To represent its area to other service providers
- To provide leadership to its community
- To provide civic pride and presence

Two of its policy objectives are

- the Council will function as efficiently and effectively as it can, as a steward of the public money with which it is entrusted.
- The Council will set out to explain what it is seeking to do, and why, and will listen to what local people have to say to it about their needs and aspirations.

### Background Papers

Reports to Council and Finance and Governance Cttee – October 2022-January 2023

