

Naunton Parish Council 20th March 2017

It is four years since the last county council elections . I am seeking re-election and in this report I want to explain the budget that we have agreed for the forthcoming financial year. During the last 4 years both the Children`s Activity Budget and my Local Highways Budget has helped me deal with priorities in the parish and the Naunton and Bourton Flood Alleviation Board helped us agree priorities for important flood alleviation work in Naunton.

Setting a budget for a county as diverse as Gloucestershire is a difficult balancing act. Political parties have different priorities and different parts of the county have different needs and expectations. The budget for adult care, public health and children and families which takes up nearly two thirds of the total revenue budget of £497.682 million is always under pressure from rising demand but these priorities need to be balanced in areas like the Cotswolds with the need of highways and flood prevention.

I believe that the budget whilst protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities also provides a good basis for continuing improvements to the county`s infrastructure. The revenue budget for communities and infrastructure is £83 million and to that should be added a forward capital budget of over £200 million. I set out below some of the highlights:

- Although the Police and Crime Commissioner has withdrawn from the Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership, the county council values this service and has allocated an additional £390,00 to ensure that its valuable work continues.
- Additional specialists to work alongside extra social workers to improve practice including a focus on mental health and adoption - £500,000
- Money to improve the process for traffic regulation orders to help keep our county moving - £100,000
- An additional £10,000 for every county councillor (from £20k to £30k) in the highways local scheme - £530,000
- Extra investment in highways - £9 million . This will continue our programme of resurfacing rather than just filling pot holes.
- An additional £500,000 for the lengthsman`s scheme . This scheme which provides dedicated crews to work with town and parish councils to clear verges, clean out grips and gulleys and clean signage for example have proved very popular and there will now be a dedicated team for each of the six district areas in the county.
- Extra support for people with disabilities including tackling disability hate crime - £400,000
- Investment to improve adults` physical and mental health whilst reducing social isolation and loneliness including social prescribing - £600,000

Gloucestershire currently charges £41 per year less than the average county council, including the adult care levy, and £157 per year less than the highest charging. For an average band D household the proposed total increase would be £45.25 per year, or £3.77 per month. The extra investment mainly comes from additional central government grants and also an increase to the council tax rate.

