

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- FC24/031

Committee:-	Finance and Governance Committee
Date:-	18 th September 2022
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Clerk
Report Title:-	Timetable and Consultation Process, 2025-26 Budget
Wards Affected:-	All

1. Purpose of Report

To seek agreement to the process for making and consulting on the 2025-26 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	18 th September 2024	Agree principles to inform budget preparation Provisionally identify new or changed areas of expenditure.

Budget preparation period	19 th September to 16 th October 2024	Period for members to make proposals for items to be included within budget
Council	23 rd October 2024	Council to a) consider likely 2024/5 budget out-turn b) consider a draft budget for 25/26 for consultation c) consider any changes to the corporate plan d) agree consultation process for both budget and corporate plan
Consultation period	25 th October to 4 th December 2024	Consultation period over 6 weeks – nature to be agreed but to include:- Drop in consultation event, Newlands centre, Friday 15 th and Saturday 16 th November
Council	11 th December 2024	Consider consultation responses and agreed broad shape of budget; agree revisions to the corporate plan.
Council	15 th January 2025	Agree final budget and precept
NNC deadline	17 th January 2025	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. This year, there is to be no Town meeting in November but It is proposed to keep all the other elements

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 £490,000 and the likely annual turnover is £530,000. The precept amount translates as band D average of £28.68 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. There is no indication that NNC intends to devolve any services to Town and Parish councils during the coming financial year, but that might change. Contact is being maintained by town councils with NNC senior management on the matter.

5. Policy Implications

The Corporate Plan says that the Councils exist :-

- 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

