



RamseyParkeston
PARISH COUNCIL

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**Financial Report 2015/16
&
Proposed Budget 2016/17**

Financial Year 2015/16

The outcome of this proposed budget shows a minimal increase of 2% on the precept request of 2015/165, security of fixed contracts for landscaping and street light maintenance until 2018 has assisted in being able to continue delivering services without any major impact on the precept request.

In addition to this proposal I have included a table of annual mandatory costs and financial breakdown for 2015/16 to assist in following this recommendation.

No charges have been incurred from the bank this year; issues with the reason being given as signatures, causing payment of a cheque being declined which was raised for payment for the essential work carried out by a contractor in relation to the Cemetery water supply, prompted research in changing banks although this has been the first problem encountered with the Co-operative bank since opening the account in 2007.

Most banks are trying to move customers towards internet banking hence charges are being imposed on cheque accounts; the options open to suit the current banking procedures of the council are limited therefore I recommend remaining with the current bank, the Co-operative bank with the approved addition of the Clerk as signatory in the case of emergency only together with the agreement to reduce signatures required to be two, reduced from three¹, on any transaction will assist in the current issues. The Co-operative Bank has no charges on the current cheque account and pays minimal interest. In changing banks it has transpired that there are no business banks with no tariff, nor pay interest on a cheque account.

Electronic banking proves to be more economical and I recommend that this avenue is explored to make further savings; with an addition to the Council's finance regulations to include any electronic transactions are to reflect the requirements of approval of two signatures and levels of access recommended to be full access for the Clerk/RFO with access to view transactions on the account to be available to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Financial year 2016/17

In relation to Councillors DPs in the task of making decisions of setting the council tax for the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council there is no legal requirement for a dispensation to take part in the business of setting the council tax, which is in any event a decision affecting the generality of the public in the area of our council, rather than you as an individual.

In preparing this recommendation to the Council for the financial year 2016/17 I have taken into account the advice and current legislation; the Parish and Town Council Precepts (Referendums) Bill 2012-13 that failed to complete its passage through Parliament before the end of the session remains unchanged.

Summary of the Parish and Town Council Precepts (Referendums) Bill 2012-13 is a bill to give effect to Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011; to amend section 52ZC of the Government Finance Act (1992) (inserted by that schedule) to require parish and town councils to conduct local referendums in the event that they choose to increase their precept by 2 % or more in the following financial year; and for connected purposes:

¹ Minutes of the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council meeting held on 19th November 2015 refer.

To keep up to date with the progress of the Bill going through Parliament I remain signed up for email alerts, to report to the Council at any such time further news is received.

The income from the Cemetery Lodge continues to be secured by monthly rental payments being made by standing order direct into the Council's bank account.

I submit the following recommendations to the members of the Council:

1. **Office Equipment:** £500 – No Change
2. **Staff salary:** £12,000: No Change as set according to the national agreement and in line with the Clerk's contract; NJC salary point Scale1, Spinal Column Point 21 (£10.04 per hour x 18 hours per week) being the hourly rate for part-time clerks applicable from 1st April 2013; notification from the National Joint Council for Local Government Services dated 14 November 2014; states that an agreement has been reached on pay scales 2014-16 with an increase for salary point Scale 1. Spinal Column Point 21 to £10.261 per hour as from 1st January 2015. Additional hours can be claimed for holiday pay, attending external meetings and training days together with additional work in relation to Parkeston Cemetery.

A contract of employment is in place between the Council and Clerk; reviewed as recorded in Part B of the minutes of the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council PPC meeting held on 15th April 2015 at which a written statement of employment was accepted and signed by the Chairman: an annual review is to be undertaken.

Work Place Pension: Between October 2012 and April 2017; all employers must enrol staff into a workplace pension for those eligible. This is called automatic enrolment.

Eligibility status means if the employee is:

- not already in a workplace pension
- aged 22 or over
- under State Pension age
- earn more than £10,000 a year
- work in the UK.

The date the employer has to start automatic enrolment at the workplace depends on how many people are employed. In the case of the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council the current Clerk's staging date is 1st May 2017 with a calculation of monthly contributions of £3.32 by the Clerk and £4.15 by the Council (annual total contribution £99.52). There is an option to opt out of the scheme and at such time I shall be taking that path being already in a healthy pension scheme at my main job with the Harwich Haven Authority, therefore no impact will be made on the precept.

3. **Office rental:** £500: No Change
4. **Hall rentals:** No Change; paid as donations under S19, circa £275 per annum.
5. **Travelling:** £200: No Change.
Travel allowances are set by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services with amendments circulated to members as and when received.
6. **Telephone Rental:** £550: No Change: includes the supply a land line rental for the Chairman to a maximum of £70.00 per quarter this enables the Chairman to conduct council business and to limit the cost to parishioners in contacting the Chairman.

7. **Stationery:** £800: No Change
8. **Audit fees:** £500: No Change: covering both annual internal and external audits (external audit fees are set by the Audit Commission as published by the National Financial Advisor, SLCC).
9. **Annual Memberships:** £850: No Change
10. **Training Costs:** £1000: No Change: All Councillors are encouraged to bring forward ideas for training that can now be easily arranged in house where delivered by the EALC.
11. **Insurance:** £1,300: increase of £300 as proven and to ensure Landlords Insurance is in place to protect both the property and tenants of the Parkeston Cemetery Chapel Lodge.
12. **Chairs Allowance:** £650: increase of £50 (last increase awarded 2014/15 budget)
13. **Cemetery Water and Sewerage:** £750: increase of £150 to cover unknown regular charges following the water leak that has now been addressed although true usage unknown to date. Meter readings will provided payment for usage at the Parkeston Cemetery Lodge being covered by the tenant directly.
14. **Business Rates:** £500: No Change: (currently 100% discount award remains in place until March 2016).
15. **Cemetery Interments/Memorials Income:** £1,000: no increase is proposed for the forthcoming year to ensure our competitiveness remains high.
16. **Cemetery Lodge Rent:** 5% increase to be implemented as from 1st April 2016 [currently set at £543 per calendar month to be increased to £570 per calendar month] and will continue to be reviewed annually.
17. **Landscape Contract work:** £11,195.00 increased from £10,096: a fixed contract of 5 years to 31st April 2018. The contract equates to a value of £9,195 scheduled contracted work; an additional £2,000 being set aside for additional unforeseen works and improvements. [copy of schedule and costs enclosed for information]
18. **Donations:** £3,500: No Change: all applications are considered on merit; Hall rentals for RPPC meetings are considered as donations under S19, circa £275 per annum.
The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has advised that the appropriate sum for the purpose of section 137(4)(a) – (Power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purpose not otherwise authorised) of the Local Government Act 1972 for parish and town councils in England for 2016-17 is £7.36 per parishioner.
19. **Street lighting:**
 - Supply:** £1,100: No Change: [Ramsey Ward]
 - Maintenance:** £1,500: **reduction** of £100 proven with a 5 year fixed term contract in place with a retainer of £558.00 per annum until 31st July 2018 to maintain the 33 light fittings in Ramsey Ward owned by the Council. [Ramsey Ward]

20. Restoration of memorial: £1,000.00: No Change.

21. Projects: £12,000; No Change: the following proposals remain proposed during the municipal year 2016/17:

- **Ramsey Triangle: £6,000:** proposed village sign to be designed by the villagers and to be sited on the triangle together with planters once permission has been sourced from ECC Highways.
- **Parkeston Cemetery Chapel: £4,000:** maintenance on the building to ensure safety to the public.
- **Small Projects: £2,000: projects** to address maintenance and enhance services for both wards [maximum number of small projects set at £100 per project; those of a higher value can be considered and awarded on merit by the Council.]

22. Reserves: £5,000: No Change: £4,600 used in 2015/16 for the emergency repair to address the leak in the water supply to the Parkeston Cemetery, remains contingency to cushion the impact of such unexpected events or emergencies. The advice to the size of the reserve and that given to external auditors is that the general revenues reserves lie within the range of three to twelve months gross expenditure; that of the RPPC equates approximately to the value of £10,000 therefore I remain confident that the amount proposed is acceptable.

Estimated receipts for the Parish Council for financial year 2015/16 is projected to be:

1. Cemetery Lodge Rents: £6840: an additional income over the year of £324; paid by monthly standing order direct to Bank.
2. Interest: £50.00: No Change
3. Burials, memorials: £1,000: No Change
4. VAT Return: £2,500 No Change
5. Chapel Storage Rent: Loss income of £104 over the year with the clearing of the Chapel to allow maintenance and improvements to be considered for future use.

Equating to a predicted income totalling £10,390

With the use of an internal balance of £5,000 this recommendation arrives at a precept request of £41,925 against £41,186 on the previous year proving an increase of 2%:

The current published Tendring District Council Register of Electors donates 1043 dwellings in the parish, thus an average annual contribution of £40.20 per household [over all house bands] and equates to the Precept Request of £41,925.

Special Expenses:

Ramsey Ward:

- Landscape Services Contract [Ramsey War Memorial Hall Playing Field and Orchard Close]
- Street Lights: supply and maintenance

Parkeston Ward:

- Landscape Services Contract [Welfare Park and Parkeston House front boundary]

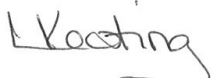
The recommendation remains for all income from the cemetery to be set aside for reinvestment within the cemetery for repairs and maintenance to the grounds and buildings as required. [A separate record of accounts relating to the Cemetery is retained; a copy of such is enclosed for your information]

The limit of the RPPC bank balance is directed by the Audit Commission to be no more than 1.5 times the amount of the precept request – £41,925 x 1.5 = £62,887

	Credit	Debit
Balance brought forward 01 April 15	£28,572	
Expenditure predicted to end March 16		£40,731
Income predicted to end March 16	£51,209	
Predicted Balance as at 1 st April 2016	£39,050	

Confirmed figures received from Tendring District Council show the amount of £4,246, a predicted reduction of 5% on the previous year, has been granted to Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council under the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS); this will set the precept request to be submitted to Tendring District Council for £37,679 [see copy of Ready Recknor enclosed], an increase of 2% on the previous year, by Friday 22nd January 2016.

I therefore recommend this budget to the Ramsey and Parkeston Parish Council to continue delivering best value to the parishioners of the Council.



Lin Keating
Responsible Financial Officer
Dated: 3rd December 2015

This recommendation has been agreed by those present at the meeting of the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council held on 19th January 2016 with approval given for the precept request to be submitted as directed to Tendring District Council by 22nd January 2016.

Proposed by:

Councillor..... seconded by Councillor.....

Signed by the Chairman..... [Councillor W G Elmer]

Dated: 19th January 2016

Witnessed by Councillor.....

Dated: 19th January 2016