



News from Watlington Community Office

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February 2011

Increase in Watlington Council Tax

The Parish Council has now prepared its budget for the financial year from 1st April 2011 and have agreed an increase in the precept rate. We have taken the decision that Council Tax payers would prefer a small increase rather than more extensive reductions in Parish Council services. The increase to Watlington residents will range from approximately £2 a year (Band A) to approximately £7 a year (Band H).

We understand that at this time any increase will be unpopular, and that this increase may put additional pressure on families that already have tight budgets
This report explains why the increase will be needed.

The 2010-2011 financial year has been exceptionally hard for the Parish Council. We have had to cover rising costs for the services we use as well as a number of very large increases that exceeded our budget estimates. These exceptional items include rent for the Sports Field up by £3,500; Business Rates on the Community Office up by £5,000; and costs for Lighting and Maintenance of the Hill Road car park up by nearly £2,000. We have had to assimilate these extra costs without an increase in income. We did not increase the Parish Council Tax in 2010 because of the low inflation in the preceding year and in addition the contributions from businesses to keeping the Hill Road car park free to users have reduced because of businesses closing.

We have reviewed every aspect of expenditure and income, and have managed to reduce our budget down to £84,000 for 2011-12. This is a £12,000 reduction on the expected final spend for 2010-11. As a result, there will be some reduction in services that you will notice in the forthcoming year. For example, the frequency of grass cutting will be reduced and not all grass cuttings will be removed. We have committed ourselves to further review of all costs during the year, with the aim of finding further reductions, or increasing our income through promoting more use of our facilities such as the Pavilion and Town Hall.

Specific figures will be circulated with SODC's Community Charge information however if you have any questions please contact the Community Office or come to The Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 14th April at 7.30pm in the Pavilion

Posters in the Town

Please can all residents and organisations who put up posters around the town please ensure that they are removed once the event is over. Please help us keep our town tidy!

Would you like to be more involved in what happens in your community?

Parish Council elections will be held on

May 4th 2011. If you would like to apply to become a Councillor, please contact the Clerk on the above number.

CAB

Citizens Advice Bureau is in Watlington Community office every Thursday from 9.30am-1.30pm. They have a 'drop in' until 10.30am and then appointments only. To book your appointment phone 01491 578267

PCSO Diane Greenwood C9840 and PC Ian Kent 4555

If you wish to contact PCSO Diane Greenwood on any issue telephone 0845 8505505 - to leave a message or report an incident or email at: diane.greenwood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
Alternatively you can always leave a message via the Parish Office.

Dates of forthcoming regular meetings:

Strategy – Tuesday 22nd February

Planning Committee – Tuesday 1st March

Full Council – Tuesday 8th March

Pavilion and Sports Field: Thursday 14th March - Pavilion

Operations Committee: Wednesday 16th March at 10am

All meetings start at 8pm and are held in the Community Office unless otherwise stated. We welcome residents attending any of these meetings as observers. If people wish to speak on a particular agenda item it is necessary to contact the Parish Clerk during office hours by noon the day before the meeting. Minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available to members of the public and can be viewed on our website or in the Parish Office during opening hours.

The Parish Office is open:

9.30am-12.30pm Mon, Tues, Weds, Fri and 9.30am -1pm on Thurs.

Collated by Kristina Tynan, Clerk and Angie Paterson, Vice-Chairman

