

<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>8.5</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Budget 2025/'26 - Notes</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>COUNCIL MEETING of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>
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Following the December meeting, members decided they would like to maintain last year's precept i.e not increase the precept request for 2025/'26.

I have attached the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft Precept Calculator to show Actual Net to 31<sup>st</sup> December in the current year against budget plans for 2025/'26.

Some items to highlight:

19 – Rec Ground Hire Charges were significantly higher due to Kabir's Football Academy in the summer. Ordinarily only school hires, Annual Fayre & one or two private hires. A budget allowance of £350 is potentially rather ambitious.

104 – Grant budget has been reduced from £3k to £2k – historically only Environment Group have applied for around £800-£900. Are members happy with this?

107 – Training actual spend skewed by GL/MC handover mentoring additional hours, allocated to training rather than salary costs.

109 – A budget allowance of £400 for the Millenium Garden has been included following Sonia's request last month.

116 – Verge cutting has increased significantly, but the overall budget for grounds maintenance remaining with John O'Conner was agreed at last month's meeting and still represents best value.

The numbers at the end showing Tax Base figures etc. shows that the increase in the tax base represents a 0.2% decrease overall (same amount is being split between a higher number of households).

Please note that the numbers don't match identically due to rounding up & down and decimal places!

#### Recommendations / Options

Members to accept the 2<sup>nd</sup> and final draft budget proposal and agree the precept request of £35,217.71 for 2025/'26.

Alternatively, a 0.2% could be applied to allow for the increased tax base (£35,288.15) – this is probably not worth the 'good news' story of no increase.

Reserves are healthy - £43k in Nationwide, £25k Co-op deposit & the grant from RDC for the tennis court/MUGA is still to be claimed (£19,250). CIL monies of approx. £10k are due in the next financial year which represents the final instalment from Upper Wilting Farm. An allowance of £25k has been made for the playground project, which would leave approximately £63k in reserves which for an annual precept demand of £35k is more than adequate as a total reserves balance.