

## STATEMENT BY COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL ON 2024/25 BUDGET

Cockermouth Town Council approved a balanced budget for 2024/25 at a meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Despite changes that will make some savings, rising costs of overheads and necessary items of exceptional expenditure, including major essential works to the roof of the Town Hall, one of the town's iconic listed buildings, have required an increase in the precept paid by Cockermouth residents through their council tax.

The total increase in the precept for the coming financial year is £85,550 on the current year. This equates to a 25.39% or £22.13 per year increase to a Band D property, which is less than 43p per week.

Charges made by the Town Council for some services such as the allotment rentals and wedding room hire have been reviewed and increased, to reflect the cost of providing these services more fairly.

Jane Ollerenshaw, Town Clerk said "We have looked hard at our budget for next year, but there is no way round this increase without cutting our most successful activities, such as the annual fireworks and Christmas lights or impacting our essential services, such as the public toilets and the library. The increase in the precept wasn't one that we wanted to implement, but it is needed to break even and maintain Cockermouth's outstanding reputation as a great place to live, work and visit. I know that we are not alone, as it's a difficult financial situation facing a lot of councils across the country."

Cumberland Council, which replaced Allerdale Borough and Cumbria County Councils last year, collects the council tax from local residents, which includes the precept for Cockermouth. The new rates for all properties across Bands A to H will begin in April.

The draft minutes of the February 21<sup>st</sup> Town Council meeting are available on the Town Council website and will be approved at the next meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>, subject to any amendments. Members of the public are welcome to attend all Town Council meetings and notices are posted both on the website and on the Town Council noticeboard at the side of the library.

For more information, please email the Town Clerk, Jane Ollerenshaw, on [clerk@cockermouth.org](mailto:clerk@cockermouth.org) or contact your ward councillor whose details can be found here <https://www.cockermouth.org/our-councillors/>