

Since its formation in 2011 **Midsomer Norton Town Council**, its eleven Councillors and Officers has been working hard to deliver an increasing range of projects and services to take the town forward.

Focusing on its strategic objectives overleaf, the Council serves a population of almost 12,000 people living in over 4,500 households. The Precept is a small proportion of the overall Council Tax on every residential property in the area and forms the Council's income for the year. However, the Council also receives some income for facilities it provides such as allotments.

During 2013-2014, a Community Survey was completed to inform future priorities and over 25% of the electorate responded. The results will provide clear evidence for the emerging work on a Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Town Council's contribution to strategic planning by BANES Council.

### **2014/2015 Income - Precept**

In setting its budget for 2014-2015, the Council has carefully considered the costs of additional services and responsibilities since last year and also looked at the key projects it is planning to focus on. At the same time, Council Tax payers themselves have been facing a difficult financial climate. The Council has decided to keep the amount paid by each household the same for 2014/15. For a Band D tax payer, the town council element will remain at £86.16 resulting in an overall increase in tax income of £7,711 to £340,614.

### **Community Development**

The Council's vision is of an inclusive community where individuals will respect each other and contribute to the well-being of the whole town.

The Council has a number of schemes in place:

- Midsomer Norton Life, our community newsletter, is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> issue which will focus on an action plan from the recent survey.

- The creation of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust to carry out three main roles – managing community buildings and spaces on a day to day basis, organising community events and encouraging and supporting community groups.
- Securing community buildings as long term assets for the town such as the Town Hall and Orchard Hall. The Town Trust will manage these leased buildings as well as the town's green spaces for the benefit of the community.
- Acquiring a long lease on the Church of the Holy Ghost Garden to provide a peaceful haven in the town for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Running a grants scheme which continues to distribute funds to potentially over 80 community organisations.
- Installing defibrillators in the town to ensure that 24 hour access is provided to anyone who suffers a heart attack.
- Involving younger people in the town by launching a Youth Council and focusing on events that will attract younger people.

### **Civic Pride**

In order to ensure that Midsomer Norton is a town we can feel proud of, the Council continues to:

- Operate Ground Operations Contracts for horticultural planting, grass cutting and town warden services which have contributed significantly to improving the look of the town.
- Implement a range of initiatives to promote the night time economy of the town including providing Street Marshals on Friday and Saturday nights, a Designated Public Place Order to control street drinking, complemented by the Community Alcohol Partnership scheme. Recent crime statistics have shown a dramatic improvement in the safety of the town centre. The Council continues to seek to work with a range of stakeholders to ensure that we listen to their concerns and build relationships.
- Influence regeneration in the town through the Economic Development Partnership to focus on generating new employment opportunities and increased footfall as part of the town regeneration plan to unlock the town's potential.

- Turn 40 year old proposals in to a reality of a Town Park to address the shortage of green space in the town including developing a concept model and negotiating with landowners and the local authority.
- Seek to improve the appearance of key areas such as the significant improvements to signage at the Midsomer Enterprise Park which were introduced in partnership with the businesses and landlords.

The Town Council also administers or funds the following services and facilities from its office at Midsomer Norton Town Hall:

- The recreation ground at West Clewes (North Road)
- The War Memorial in the High Street
- Public conveniences at the Town Hall
- Bus shelters
- Public seats
- Litter and dog waste bins
- Allotments at Radstock Road which are managed by an Allotment's Association.

### **Being a well-run Council**

#### ***Council Meetings***

Meetings of the Council are normally held on the first Monday of the month and Planning Committee meetings are on the second or third Monday. Meetings are held in the Town Hall, The Island, Midsomer Norton, starting at 7.00pm.

Public notice of meetings is given on the Council's notice board and a schedule of the main meetings can also be obtained from the Town Council's Offices or the Town Council's web site.

All Council and Planning Meetings are open to the public and press, however they may be temporarily excluded to allow discussion of establishment, property and finance matters because of their confidential nature. There is a public session prior to the meeting when questions can be asked of the Council by members of the public although they may not take part in the meeting. The agenda and related reports for meetings of the Town Council and its Committees can be viewed in full at the Town Council's Offices and on the Council's website.

Each year the Town Council hosts a Town Meeting. This is when the local community is encouraged to attend and inform Town Councillors of their concerns and requests. The next Town Meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014 in the Town Hall Midsomer Norton, commencing at 7.00pm.

### Planning

We are consulted on all planning applications, local and strategic plans by Bath & North East Somerset Council. In addition the Town Council is consulted on proposals affecting the Midsomer Norton area by bodies such as Bath & North East Somerset Council, health service organisations and Government Departments. A key strand of work to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which will shape planning decisions in the town and surrounds, is under way and will build on the recent survey.

Planning applications are considered by the Planning Committee. Councillors contributed to the development of Bath and North East Somerset Council's neighbourhood planning protocol.

### Income & Expenditure

The Town Council is required to give details to the local community of its proposed annual income and expenditure. The table on the next page shows the budgeted income and expenditure for 2014/2015.

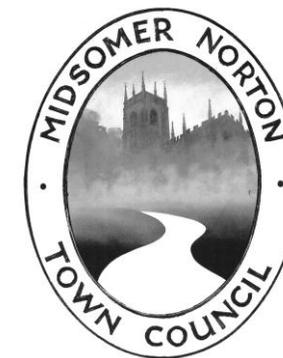
The proposed budget exactly balances income and expenditure. This will protect the level of reserves at around three months' expenditure (as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils) whilst avoiding any increase in the level of tax paid by the people of the town through their Council Tax.

*If you have any questions on the precept please contact the Town Clerk on 01761 418701, by e-mail to [townclerk@midsomernortontowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:townclerk@midsomernortontowncouncil.co.uk) or by post to The Town Hall, The Island, Midsomer Norton, Radstock BA3 2HQ.*

REF: MSNTC/PRECEPT/2014/15/A

### Budget 2014/2015

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Central Services - Council Office, Staff and Equipment, Professional Fees	£112,060
Democratic Process - Newsletter, Website, Training, etc	£22,060
Parks and Play Areas - Equipment Maintenance	£3,848
Allotments - Water and grounds maintenance	£1,850
Ground Services - maintaining the town environment	£34,500
Memorials - Maintenance	£600
Street Marshals	£20,000
Community Support - grants	£20,000
Community Events	£30,800
Youth and Children activities	£7,500
Community Plan	£35,000
Town Park Development Costs	£16,300
Capital and Projects - Loans and capital provision	£29,096
<b>Total Budget Expenditure</b>	<b>£343,114</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Precept Received	£308,584
Local Council Tax Support Grant	£32,030
Interest Received	£1,200
Allotments Rent Receivable	£1,300
<b>Total Budget Income</b>	<b>£343,114</b>



## Midsomer Norton Town Council

### 2014/15 Precept Explained

#### The Council's Strategic Objectives

- To develop a strong sense of community
- To encourage civic pride in our town
- To be a well-run council that delivers results