Agenda Item 26/27/220

Sturminster Newton Town Council

Operations Only Budget 2027/28

Budget-setting recommendations from the Finance & Policy Committee to Full Council

Purpose and terminology

This report provides explanatory notes for the draft Operations Budget for 2027/28.

In the accompanying Scribe Accounting report, "current year" means 2027/28, as that financial year has been opened to create the budget data. "Previous year" means 2026/27.

Budget assumptions

Known figures have been used wherever available. Where appropriate, the forecast is based on expenditure from April to September 2026, multiplied by two to estimate a full year. Some figures remain estimates because up-to-date information is not yet available and some are estimated using information from the previous 12 months.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) central forecast expects Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation to fall to 2% from 2027. For budgeting purposes, increases of between 2% and 10% have been applied according to the nature of each service and previous experience. A 4% National Joint Council (NJC) pay uplift has been allowed for salaries, compared with the 3.3% settlement applied last year. Insurance has been increased by 10% on advice received, although the fleet element may ultimately be lower. Gas and Electricity figures have been estimated based on a 10% increase

Specific items considered by Committee

Legal and Professional Fees: held at £7,000.

Training: reduced to £5,000, reflecting the likely underspend in 2026/27. Any underspend in 26 27 will be ear marked for future training needs.

Fuel: increased by £350

Plant Purchases: increased by £200

Staffing budget: reviewed by staffing committee and approved by F&P Committee.

Projects / Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) funding: £10,000 included in projects at present, any additional budget allocation to be decided by Full Council.

Grants: £400 to be allocated for purchase of the Town Xmas tree. Full Council to decided on additional allocation.

Estimated utility and insurance costs to be updated where possible before budget is set.

QUESTIONS BEFORE THE MEETING — Members are asked to submit questions in advance wherever possible, allowing the Town Clerk to confirm the relevant information and provide a complete answer at the meeting rather than reporting back afterwards.