



Sturminster Newton Town Council

Operations Only Budget 2027/28

Budget-setting notes for committee consideration

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.

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 4% 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.

Specific items for committee consideration

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

Training: reduced to £5,000, reflecting the likely underspend in 2026/27.

Projects / Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) funding: £10,000 included within Projects; the Committee may wish to consider creating a separate budget line.

Grants and Christmas tree: grants are usually set at £4,000, with additional provision for the town Christmas lights. As the Town Council now purchases and collects the tree directly instead, the Committee may wish to move this cost to the Civic Budget.

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.