

Council

Report of the Town Clerk

Staffing Review - Proposed new appointments

Background

1. A staffing review was identified by the Hoey Ainscough report as being an essential part of the council's development. Council made provision in its 2017-18 budget for the costs of the outcome of the staffing review, and the Budget and Administration Committee has previously approved the methodology proposed by the Town Clerk.
2. Council as a corporate body must be adequately resourced in order to perform the tasks required of it by the decision of council.
3. Council has clearly adopted a definition of itself as an authority that enables and facilitates activity, rather than focussing on delivering services itself. Council has demonstrated its commitment to this model by funding partnership working, as well as providing development funding to other projects. Even in the area of local services, there is a clear reluctance for council to take on further staff to directly deliver services, preferring to commission them from other providers (e.g. NCC).
4. In the complicated civic environment of Berwick upon Tweed the strategic direction of the council has been clear since 2016; to act as partner and facilitator, and to provide democratic accountability and legitimacy to schemes designed to enhance Berwick as a place to live, to visit, and to be in business. These objectives do not digress far from the objectives the council adopted in 2015 (see appendix (i)). The Town Council has a unique capacity to add a formal layer of governance and support to projects that can enable social and commercial entrepreneurs to demonstrate they are working for the betterment of the town.
5. The way in which council works has been considerably changed since 2016, when a staffing review was first mooted. Council once again operates a committee system, and is partner in or a contributor to a number of significant projects. All of this makes significant demands upon the time of the existing staff.
6. Of council's current staff establishment three are part time staff, working in posts that are role specific. As such, there is no conflict in these roles, and discussions with staff have indicated no need to increase the time available or change the job description.
7. A matrix identifying key workstreams was issued to staff to whom it was relevant, and the results appear below (appendix (ii)). It is intended that this exercise will be repeated at least once per quarter, to enable the changing trends in work to be monitored.

8. Repairing relationships with other significant partners, such as Northumberland County Council, was a key strategic objective laid down by the current Town Clerk upon appointment as Interim Town Clerk, and was a facet of the original decision by NCC to second the post holder part time as Interim Town Clerk. As a result stakeholder relationship management is a significant part of the town clerk's role which does not appear in the matrix issued to other staff. For the purposes of this exercise it is grouped under supervision and advice.
9. The matrix issued to staff was accompanied by an interview designed to fill in the gaps, and identify where there was unmet demand for work to be performed.
10. The conclusion of the review is that council is in something of a circular trap. In the absence of sufficient resources to prepare a strategic plan, the staffing model can only be an approximation of the resources the council requires. It is possible to run council as an effective organization with current levels of staffing, but only by withdrawing from projects and programmes designed to deliver on council's core objectives.
11. The outcome of the review, and the interviews is that the team have prioritized having additional resources for financial planning and project work.

Recommendations

1. The outcome of the review, therefore, is that Council is invited to approve the proposal of the Town Clerk to undertake a suitable recruitment process to appoint to a role provisionally designated as Project Officer / Deputy Clerk. The salary for the post will be based on the range Scale Points 26-29 initially, with the postholder moving to scale points 30-34 and the job title of Deputy Clerk on successful completion of agreed training in project management (e.g. Foundation Certificate Prince II) and the Certificate in Local Council Administration.
2. It is proposed that this be a time limited post, initially for three years, but with the potential for council to make the post permanent if they so desire. The person appointed would be expected to be capable of managing and reporting on projects, of contributing to regeneration and tourism projects, and to be capable of developing their knowledge of local government law and procedures so as to deputize for the Town Clerk once suitably qualified.
3. Council is recommended to delegate to the Budget and Administration Committee authority to authorize the job description for this post, the recruitment process, and to appoint the councillors to oversee the recruitment process and interviews required.

Appendix (i)

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

The Council's mission (*adopted 2015*)

The Council will be a forward-thinking and outward-looking organisation working with and accountable to the citizens of Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth to bring about positive change.

The Council will work to:

- Promote the economic growth of Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth
- Encourage people to visit Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth
- Maintain the environment of Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth

The Council will work collectively to:

- Maintain high standards of governance, integrity and transparency
- Adopt high standards of financial management
- Operate efficiently and effectively
- Be a good employer
- Work in partnership with others
- Communicate clearly
- Be a learning organisation

Appendix (ii)

	Civics	Admin	Allotments	Parks and play areas	Supervision and advice	Projects and regen	Finance	Audit	Accounts	Tourism	Training	Total
TC	10	5	5	5	30	10	15	10	5	5	0	100
ATT C	5	70	10	10			5					100
FO	10				5	15	30	25	15			100
	25	75	15	15	35	25	50	35	20	5	0	

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Project	Promoters	Progress	Delivery Date
Pontoons / Marina	None	Technical feasibility appraised - business case requires preparation and delivery organization needs to be defined.	
<p>Council opted to support this project on 2016 by funding a technical study; meetings have taken place since completion of the survey with individuals who have urged the council to adopt the project as its own. No further action has been taken as yet.</p>			
Hospital Replacement	NCC / NHS	Outline business case under development	December 2018
<p>Council has been asked on numerous occasions to obtain an update on this project. The project is now being monitored via the Berwick Regeneration Commission.</p>			
Leisure Centre Replacement / refurbishment	Active Northumberland / NCC	Unclear - may be connected to other projects	
<p>Council decided in 2016 to support consultation work on this project, and staff have maintained a monitoring position in relation to this project, which is also being monitored by the BRC.</p>			

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Jetty Replacement	Harbour Commissioners	Update required	
No further active involvement since meetings in Q1 2017 to support the applications for funding, being monitored via CCT			
Berwick Barracks	Barracks Project Group	Update required	
After council decision to support and fund this project, staff attend meetings as necessary, and have supported the Barracks Project by providing financial and procurement support.			
Neighbourhood Plan	Town Council	Draft policies being written now	Q1 2019
Reported to committee and council routinely (last report November 2017)			
Coastal Community Team	CCT / Berwick CDT	Update required	

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Staff attend monthly CCT update meetings as necessary.			
Tourist Information Centre	Town Council	Site acquisition under way	Q1/1 2018
Council decision Sept / Oct 2016 - report to extraordinary council November 2017			
Tourism Conference	Town Council / CDT	Organization in progress	Dec 2017
Council decision October 2017 - post event report to council			
Investors Conference	Town Council	Organization in progress	May 2018
Annual event - will require greater project management in Q1 2017 as Mr Goodyer will no longer be available.			

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Car Parking Review	NCC	Report awaited	
Meeting s with consultants and NCC officers / members in Q3 / Q4 2017 - awaiting publication of report and council decision on further actions			
Pedestrian Signage	NCC / Town Council / Virgin Rail	Initial discussions with Virgin Rail - some commitment of funding	Jan 2019 (Hard deadline - Virgin funding)
Exploration of potential external funding for streetscape improvements - report to council in December 2017			
Public landholdings in Berwick	NCC / Town Council / NHS	Not commenced	
Request from councillors to explore potential of mapping and appraising public landholdings that could influence regeneration projects			
New Berwick Stadium	Berwick Stadium Trust	Scoping work underway	

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Previous council decision - monitoring only pending outcome of costing exercise			
Five Arches Football redevelopment	Tweedmouth Community Football Club	Awaiting updated proposals	
Updated proposals are expected from football club and NCC - council decisions to support and regarding land transactions are then required - currently watching brief only			
Coach Parking	NCC	Decision awaited	
Discussions with NCC / coach operators and local councillors in q4 2017 - awaiting proposals from NCC and subsequent report to council			
Chapel Street Car Park	NCC	Decision awaited / subject to planning permission	
Discussions with NCC and local councillors in q4 2017 - awaiting proposals from NCC and subsequent report to council			

Berwick Regeneration Projects - November 2017

Quayside Regeneration	Town Council / NCC / HCA	Not commenced	
Issue raised by councillors - linked to pontoons project (above) and public land mapping.			

Council

Report of the Responsible Financial Officer

Budget Proposals

Background.

1. Members will note that we are following the same process as in 2016-17; budget proposals are produced for consideration at this meeting, before the precept requirement for council tax purposes is approved at the next meeting in December.
2. This process allows time for NCC to give us a clear indication of the likely tax base, and other supporting information.
3. As in 2016-17 this budget has been prepared, on the advice of the External Auditor, on the basis that the budget should include all the council's income, including monies received from the Freeman of Berwick, and that the council's budget and Medium Term Financial Plan should include an estimate for the income from the Freeman calculated on the basis of the recent trend for receipts.
4. As in 2016-17 Members are asked to waive Financial Regulation 3.6, which requires the preparation of a completed set of budget proposals by 30th October each year. Simply, the timescales involved in monitoring regulatory announcements, the outturn from the half year, and the indicative tax base, make it impossible to prepare a set of budget proposals by 30th October. The announcement by the Secretary of State of his intention not to implement capping this year, for instance, was only made on 30th October. Recommendation 1 below proposes a solution to this.
5. A paper will be forthcoming in January 2018 itemizing those items of cost, including replacement costs of assets, and non-annual costs, such as elections, which should be funded from reserves, and the levels of provision towards reserves that should be made for them.

Budget

1. The draft budget spreadsheet separately circulated with these papers (Appendix (i)) indicates a budget deficit; members are invited to bear in mind that council should not set a deficit budget due to recurring costs without identifying how the deficit will be addressed in subsequent years.
2. The overall budget envelope shows an increase in expenditure of £27,828. Overall changes in budget headings are explained below.

- a. Staffing costs increase by £17,550 as a result of incremental drift, the higher than predicted cost of the Town Clerk's salary and increased pension costs due to auto enrolment. This figure includes the monies set aside as a consequence of the Hoey Ainscough report for a staffing review, which will be discussed in confidential business at this meeting.
 - b. Other administration costs increase by £4,883, principally because of election costs and increased insurance costs. Members are therefore invited to consider whether, given that election costs are a once in four year's item, it is legitimate this year to fund some of the precept increase from reserves.
 - c. Members are invited to note, within other administration costs, that both office costs and operational costs will deliver savings next year.
 - d. Council Projects shows an increase within the budget of £4000 as a result of the inclusion of the Investors and Tourism Conferences, and the fixing of the cost of the Hoppa Bus replacement service at £10,000.
3. Balancing the budget.
- a. Appendix (ii) provides indicative figures for the range of precept increases required to balance the budget; these run from 2% to 12%. As last year, members are reminded that, without the final tax base figure from NCC, we can only estimate the effect of these rises on typical Band D properties - a 12% rise, requiring no funding from reserves, would equal an increase of £8.91 per year, or approximately 17p per week.
 - b. Members are reminded that, for each subsequent year, if the increase is spread over more than one year, there will be new, and unique inflationary pressures, as well as incremental drift to be accommodated. Members need to be aware that the decision not to cap, or require local council precepts to be approved by referendum, is an annual decision and there is no guarantee that government, next year, will not impose a cap on local council precept increases.

Recommendations

1. That financial regulations 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 be deleted, and financial regulation 3.9 be amended to read 'The council shall consider a draft budget no later than 30th November, and no later than 24th December in the year prior to the financial year to which it relates:' before continuing with the bullet points in existing financial regulation 3.9
2. That council indicates its preference with regard to the precept increase, and the management of the deficit.

2018-19 PRELIMINARY DRAFT BUDGET

Budget Heading Summary

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**Budget for 2016-17**

Budget Heading	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	Growth / savings
	Actual	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
Staffing	£66,344	£82,158	£69,232	£126,672	£144,222	£17,550
Other Administration	£89,045	£29,664	£41,793	£39,477	£44,360	£4,883
Council Services	£34,707	£69,119	£72,702	£81,260	£80,805	-£455
Parks & Play Areas	£9,730	£177,389	£174,757	£34,950	£35,050	£100
Promotions	£17,340	£24,800	£27,985	£26,900	£27,900	£1,000
Grants	£39,183	£12,700	£12,333	£34,700	£34,700	£0
Council Projects	£8,222	£30,000	£24,466	£8,000	£12,000	£4,000
Civic Expenditure	£14,127	£8,800	£8,066	£9,950	£10,700	£750
Total Budget	£278,698	£434,630	£431,334	£361,909	£389,737	£27,828

Cost Code Summary

Cost Code	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal	
Administration: Staffing	£66,344	£82,158	£69,232	£126,672	
Administration: Office Costs	£14,257	£10,704	£12,015	£17,817	
Administration: Operational Costs	£4,454	£2,600	£4,062	£5,660	
Administration: Councillor Costs	£819	£1,000	£682	£900	
Administration: Statutory Costs	£18,282	£13,460	£13,402	£11,200	
Administration: Miscellaneous Costs	£1,766	£1,900	£2,130	£3,900	
Council Services: Public Space Man.	£34,376	£31,580	£34,149	£25,800	
Council Services: Local Services Officers	£0	£36,384	£36,384	£53,155	
Council Services: Allotments	331	£1,155	£2,169	£2,305	
Parks & Play Areas: Projects	£0	£145,000	£148,350	£0	
Parks & Play Areas: Splash Park	£9,730	£8,769	£8,187	£8,550	
Parks & Play Areas: Play Areas	£0	£23,620	£18,220	£26,400	
Promotion: Marketing	£8,416	£11,400	£17,493	£16,400	
Promotion: Autumn Festivals	£1,419	£2,100	£2,092	£2,100	
Promotion: Festive Lighting	£6,680	£11,300	£8,400	£8,400	
Grants: Events	£16,269	£8,000	£8,520	£10,000	
Grants: Environment	£2,010	£2,700	£2,403	£2,700	
Grants: Community	£20,904	£2,000	£1,410	£22,000	
Council Projects: General	£8,222	£30,000	£24,466	£8,000	
Council Projects: Neighbourhood Plan	£0	£3,800	£3,791	£0	
Council Projects: Barracks Reawakening	£0	4000	3865	0	
Council Projects: Investors Conference	0	0	953	0	
Civic Expenditure: Mayoral/Civic Costs	£10,270	£4,700	£3,114	£4,700	
Civic Expenditure: Civic Events	£3,857	£4,100	£4,952	£5,250	

Admin

Budget Heading	2015-16 Actual Expenditure	2016-17		2017-18 Budget Proposal	2018-19	Notes
ADMINISTRATION		Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn			
Staffing						
Salaries: Total	£66,278	£81,608	£68,807	£126,072	£140,622	
Training	£0	£150	£150	£300	£1,000	
Travel & subsistence	£66	£400	£275	£300	£1,000	
Memberships					£600	
Meetings					£1,000	
Total Staff Costs	£66,344	£82,158	£69,232	£126,672	£144,222	
Office Costs						
Rent	£6,600	£6,600	£6,600	£6,600	£11,510	
Service charge	£214	£214	£214	£214	£0	
Rates	£0	£0	£0	£6,200	£1,500	
Gas	£222	£350	£516	£390	£0	
Electricity	£599	£540	£561	£510	£510	
Water	£205	£200	£209	£220	£0	
Telecoms	£1,790	£800	£1,541	£1,500	£1,200	
IT Equipment	1790	£400	£400	£400	£400	
IT Support	£1,284	£1,200	£1,080	£1,080	£1,080	
Equipment & furniture	983	£400	£230	£300	£300	
Cleaning	£570		£664	£403	£0	
Equipment replacement fund					£750	
Total Office Costs	£14,257	£10,704	£12,015	£17,817	£17,250	
Operational Costs						
Software Licence Fee	£443	£400	£295	£900	£1,450	
Postage	£359	£450	£319	£450	£450	
Stationery & Printing	£1,203	£1,000	£839	£1,000	£1,000	
Photocopies	£1,581	£600	£1,597	£1,200	£800	
Photocopier warranty & support			£708	£710	£0	
Town Council Website	£260	£150	£100	£150	£150	
Recruitment expenses	£444	£0		£1,000	£1,000	
Bank Charges	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Waste Collection	£164	£0	£204	£250	£0	
Total Operational Costs	£4,454	£2,600	£4,062	£5,660	£4,850	
Councillor Costs						
Training	£300	£500	£286	£500	£500	
Travel & subsistence	£519	£500	£396	£250	£250	
Supplies				£150	£150	
Total Councillor Costs	£819	£1,000	£682	£900	£900	

Statutory Costs

Insurance - General	£1,162	£850	£886	£900	£900
Insurance - Play Areas		£2,860	£813	£2,000	£2,000
Insurance - Public Realm		£2,400	£894	£900	£900
Insurance - Civic Regalia		£4,300	£2,051	£2,100	£4,500
Audit	£800	£800	£1,200	£1,000	£1,000
Audit - internal	£600	£750	£2,728	£2,800	£2,800
Legal & professional fees	£727	£1,000	£4,830	£1,000	£1,000
Election expenses	£14,993	£0	£0		£3,210
Public notices	£0	£500	£0	£500	£500
Total Statutory Costs	£18,282	£13,460	£13,402	£11,200	£16,810

Miscellaneous Costs

Publications	£51	£50	£50	£50	£250
Survey and communications				£1,500	£1,500
Publicity	£0	£50	£50	£50	£0
Subscriptions	£1,623	£1,300	£1,773	£2,000	£2,500
Meeting expenses	£92	£500	£257	£300	£300
Total Miscellaneous Costs	£1,766	£1,900	£2,130	£3,900	£4,550

Exceptional Costs

Exceptional Costs	£49,467	£0	£9,502		
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Total Administration	£89,045	£29,664	£41,793	£39,477	£44,360
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Council Services

Budget Heading	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18		Notes
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
COUNCIL SERVICES						
Public Space Management						
Public seat maintenance	£616	£11,000	£10,670	£3,000	£0	
Public seat insurance	£1,183					
Public Seat Purchase	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Bus shelter maintenance	£2,981	£2,000	£3,461	£300	£1,000	
Bus shelter insurance	£737					
Bus shelter purchase	£3,408	£0	£0			
Bus Shelter Rates	£0	£0	£37	£0	£0	
Public Realm Works	£1,919	£1,000	£1,986	£2,000	£2,000	
Litter bins and grit bins	£4,289	£1,600	£2,640	£920	£920	
Dog Fouling (WOOFs)	£2,317	£2,000	£1,399	£2,000	£0	
War memorials maintenance	£2,000	£80	£80	£80	£80	
Floral Displays [Materials]	£6,181	£6,200	£5,330	£6,500	£6,500	
Floral Displays [Labour]	£3,445	£2,700	£3,596	£4,000	£4,000	
Additional grass cuts	£3,300	£5,000	£4,950	£5,000	£0	
Public Toilet costs	£2,000			£2,000	£0	
Storage hire					£2,000	
Total PSM	£34,376	£31,580	£34,149	£25,800	£16,500	
Local Services Officers						
Staff Costs		£25,584	£25,584	£44,515	£52,500	
Training		£1,250	£1,250			
Transport		£6,050	£6,050	£6,840	£7,500	
Equipment & Consumables		£3,500	£3,500	£1,800	£2,000	
Total Local Services Officers		£36,384	£36,384	£53,155	£62,000	
Allotments						
Owned						
Water	£276	£100	£770	£1,000	£1,000	
Repairs and maintenance	£0	£500	£1,094	£1,000	£1,000	
Leased						
Repairs and maintenance	£0	£500	£250	£250	£250	
National Allotment Soc Sub	£55	£55	£55	£55	£55	
Total Allotments	£331	£1,155	£2,169	£2,305	£2,305	
Total Council services	£34,707	£69,119	£72,702	£81,260	£80,805	

Parks & Play Areas

Budget Heading PARKS & PLAY AREAS	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	Notes
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
Projects						
Flagstaff Park Restoration	£0	£0	£0			13
Flagstaff Park Play Equipment	£0	£80,000	£83,350			14
Grove Gardens Play Equipment		£30,000	£30,000			
Osbourne Rd Play Area		£35,000	£35,000			
Play Equipment [other sites]	£0	£0	£0			15
Projects Total	£0	£145,000	£148,350	£0	£0	
Splash Park						
Construction	£1,151	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Electricity	£243	£240	£229	£250	£350	
Water	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	16
SLA Total	£7,469					
Site Cleaning		£884	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	17
Site maintenance	£114	£700	£763	£800	£800	
Water Quality Inspections		£3,705	£3,705	£3,900	£3,900	
Daily/Weekly Inspections	£0	£2,390	£2,390	£2,500	£2,500	
Annual Inspection	£753	£850	£100	£100	£100	
Splash Park Total	£9,730	£8,769	£8,187	£8,550	£8,650	
Play Areas [10 sites]						
Site Cleaning		£3,640	£3,640	£10,400	£10,400	
Site maintenance		£9,000	£9,000	£10,000	£10,000	
Weekly Inspections		£4,680	£4,680	£5,000	£5,000	
Annual Inspection		£6,300	£900	£1,000	£1,000	
Play Areas Total	£0	£23,620	£18,220	£26,400	£26,400	
Highcliffe						
Site maintenance [SLA]	£380					
Equipment maintenance	£90					
Inspections	£0					
Insurance	£235					
Highcliffe Play Area Total	£705	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Total Parks & Play Areas	£9,730	£177,389	£174,757	£34,950	£35,050	

Promotion

Budget Heading PROMOTION	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	Notes
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
Marketing						
Events Leaflet	£1,051					
NT Days Out & Holiday Guide	£4,220					
Visit Berwick Website	£600	£600	£560			
AONB Holiday Guide	£715					
Visit Berwick Leaflet						
Other Marketing	£1,830	£10,800	£16,933			
Advertising		£4,200	£4,170	£6,000	£6,000	
Leaflets		£4,000	£5,983	£4,300	£4,300	
Website		£600	£600	£600	£600	
Social Media				£5,000	£5,000	
Other Marketing		£500	£1,878	£500	£500	
		£9,300	£12,631			
Marketing Total	£8,416	£11,400	£17,493	£16,400	£16,400	
Berwick Autumn Festival						
Banners	£178	£900	£607	£600	£600	
Promotion	£1,241	£1,200	£1,485	£1,500	£2,500	
Total Berwick AF	£1,419	£2,100	£2,092	£2,100	£3,100	
Walking Festival						
Marketing	£0					
Walk Leaders	£0					
Transport	£775					
Management	£50					
Total Walking Festival	£825	£0		£0	£0	
Festive Lighting						
Maint & installation	£5,577	£9,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	
Lights & fittings	£172	£500				
Christmas trees	£931	£1,000	£600	£600	£600	
NCC Labour Costs	£0	£600	£600	£600	£600	
Other costs	£0	£200	£200	£200	£200	
Total Festive Lighting	£6,680	£11,300	£8,400	£8,400	£8,400	
Total Promotions	£17,340	£24,800	£27,985	£26,900	£27,900	

Grants

Budget Heading Grants	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	Notes
	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
Events						
Tweedmouth Feast	1200	£1,000	£1,150	£1,000	£1,000	
Spittal Seaside Festival	£4,000	£1,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	
Bounds Ridng	£1,500					
Other Events Grants	£9,569	£6,000	£3,370	£5,000	£5,000	
Total Events Grants	£16,269	£8,000	£8,520	£10,000	£10,000	
Environment						
BEES	£1,500	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	
Berwick in Bloom	£510	£700	£403	£700	£700	
Total Environment Grants	£2,010	£2,700	£2,403	£2,700	£2,700	
Community						
Community Projects	£904	£2,000	£1,410	£2,000	£2,000	
Advice Services	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000	£20,000	
Total Community Grants	£20,904	£2,000	£1,410	£22,000	£22,000	
Total Grants	£39,183	£12,700	£12,333	£34,700	£34,700	

Council Projects

Budget Heading	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	2018-19	Notes
COUNCIL PROJECTS	Actual Expenditure	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal		
General						25
Town Improvement Projects	399	£18,000	£17,394			
Hoppa Bus	£7,823	£12,000	£7,072	£8,000	£10,000	26
Total General Projects	£8,222	£30,000	£24,466	£8,000	£10,000	
Neighbourhood Plan						
Planning Advice		3500	3500			
Stationary & Equipment		300	291			
Publicity		0	0			
Total Neighbourhood Plan		£3,800	£3,791	£0	£0	
Barracks Reawakening						
Consultancy		4000	3865			
other						
Total Barracks Project		4000	3865	0	0	
Investors Conference						
Equipment			0			
Expenses			953			
Total Investors Conference			953	0	1000	
Tourism Conference						
Venue					300	
Refreshments					300	
Expenses					400	
Total Tourism Conference					1000	
					£12,000	

Civic Expenditure

Budget Heading	2015-16 Actual Expenditure	2016-17		2017-18 Budget Proposal	2018-19	Notes
CIVIC EXPENDITURE		Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn			
Mayoral/Civic Costs						
Mayor personal/official	£730	£2,500	£1,498	£2,500	£2,500	27
Civic Expenses	£4,729	£2,000	£1,466	£2,000	£2,000	27
Civic Regalia Insurance	£4,405					
Freedom Costs	£406	£200	£150	£200	£200	27
Total Mayoral/Civic Costs	£10,270	£4,700	£3,114	£4,700	£4,700	
Civic Events						
Remembrance Day	£1,151	£1,200	£1,200	£1,500	£1,500	
Riding the Bounds	£1,275	£2,700	£2,695	£3,250	£4,000	
Other	£1,431	£200	£1,057	£500	£500	
Total	£3,857	£4,100	£4,952	£5,250	£6,000	
Total Civic Expenditure Costs	£14,127	£8,800	£8,066	£9,950	£10,700	

Receipts

Budget Heading	2015-16	2016-17		2017-18	
	Actual Receipts	Adopted Budget	Estimated Out-turn	Budget Proposal	
Receipts					
Precept	218220	218220	218220	218220	218220
Bank Interest	193	193	193	193	0
Sundry	4285	4285	4285	4285	4285
Seats	240	240	240	240	240
Portas	21287	21287	21287	21287	21287
Play Areas	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000
Allotment Rents	599	599	599	599	599
Schedule III	115929	115929	115929	115929	115929
Admission Fees	270	270	270	270	270
					362830

Appendix D (ii)

	Year	2017-18	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19
	Precept rise	2%	2%	5%	7.50%	10%	12%
Total Expenditure		£361,909	£389,737	£389,737	£389,737	£389,737	£389,737
Current Precept		£251,000	£256,020	£256,020	£256,020	£256,020	£256,020
Schedule III income		£95,000	£99,500	£99,500	£99,500	£99,500	£99,500
Sundry income		£4,630	£4,630	£4,630	£4,630	£4,630	£4,630
Total income before any precept increase		£350,630	£360,150	£360,150	£360,150	£360,150	£360,150
Expenditure - income		£11,279	£29,587	£29,587	£29,587	£29,587	£29,587
Precept rise		£5,020	£5,120	£12,801	£19,202	£25,602	£29,587
Band D rise			1.54	3.85	5.78	7.71	8.91
Weekly increase			0.03	0.07	0.11	0.15	0.17
Transfer from reserves to balance budget		£6,259	£24,467	£16,786	£10,386	£3,985	£0

Appendix D (Addendum)

At council on 20 November 2017 the issue of the cost of staffing as a proportion of the precept was raised.

It is a complex issue which also reared its head last year. As I said last year, it's easy to be deceived by a staffing costs figure, since services we deliver via contractors won't show as having a staffing cost, but are still delivered by someone's staff - as with local services, where the service shows as a cost in our accounts, but wouldn't show in any summary of our staffing costs, since the people delivering the service aren't our staff.

There is no standard format for small council accounts that allows us to make easy comparisons across the sector - NCC impose their own rules for council tax billing purposes, and that's what I've used to compile the spreadsheet I've just shared with you. This is not private data - it's data every householder gets with their council tax bill.

As you'll see, the spreadsheet shows that, compared with other councils of a similar size, we aren't the worst performer for costs of management and support. We could do a lot better, but I would be wary of seeking to improve performance by simple measures. Let me give you an example.

It would be easy, and justifiable, for me to bill any additional time for the Finance Officer to a cost centre headed 'Community Development' and to recharge his time for doing any project work with community groups to that heading. Similarly with my time. In the final analysis that NCC publishes our management and support figure would then be reduced, and the other services figure increased. I can't comment as to whether other councils are engaged in similar practices, either to game the return, or to make clear to their councillors what services actually cost. The exercise I conducted as part of the staffing review is ongoing, and if I think next year that it's worth exploring a full recharge model, to make what we spend staff time on more transparent, I will recommend it, but right now I'm not persuaded it's appropriate.

The downside of any such exercise is that we would need to move to something nearer a full time recording system for staff. I understand councillor's concerns that I must be accountable for both how I use my time, and for how I manage the time keeping and performance of staff; I have indicated in the past that I am happy to share my diary and my timesheet, and have done so. If you require me to move to full journalling (e.g. keeping a day to day diary of what I am working on) I will do so. I'm happy to be held accountable in that way, and would happily receive any feedback as to where my focus should be.

Gareth Davies LI.B.

	Mngmnt and support	%	Rec & Leisure	%	Environmental Services	%	Cemeteries	%	Grants and subsidies	%	Other Services	%	Total spend	Net precept
Berwick	163149	45.08%	61850	17.09%	84260	23.28%	0	0.00%	45950	12.70%	6700	1.85%	361909	256020
Morpeth	241100	42.29%	167958	29.46%	58300	10.23%	0	0.00%	69950	12.27%	32740	5.74%	570048	557582
Alnwick	82565	30.91%	31470	11.78%	45088	16.88%	17560	6.57%	29555	11.06%	6090	2.28%	267138	267138
Hexham	265784	53.29%	83900	16.82%	0	0.00%	77305	15.50%	71750	14.39%	0	0.00%	498739	306875
Prudhoe	104180	28.32%	86266	23.45%	63279	17.20%	14000	3.81%	65256	17.74%	34860	9.48%	367841	304569
Ponteland	128174	31.45%	49902	12.25%	112985	27.73%	13000	3.19%	20123	4.94%	83,333	20.45%	407517	394517