



Dear Resident

STONY STRATFORD TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT 2010/2011

On your Council Tax demand, you may have noticed a payment to Stony Stratford Town Council. I am writing to you to explain the background to this payment and to the decision about the precept level for the coming year. I hope that you will also find it useful to know what the Town Council does with your money.

The Town Council, an elected part of local government, comprises 10 councillors and covers the area of Stony Stratford, Galley Hill and Fullers Slade. It employs a clerk and an information officer, both of whom work part-time. It is based in offices in the Library in Church Street, the opening hours of which are advertised widely throughout the town. The 10 councillors are elected for a period of four years. The next elections for the full Council will be held in May 2012. Contact details for all your councillors are given in the quarterly "Town Crier" and on our website: www.stonystratford.gov.uk. Council papers are also available from this site as well as information about local events and activities.

Annually, the Council adopts priorities for the coming year at its meeting in May. These help to guide our work during the year. A copy of the current priorities is available at www.stonystratford.gov.uk/Town_Council/Town_Council_Downloads and from the Council office.

The total budget for the Council for the coming year will be £135,359. The expenditure of the Council includes the maintenance of the public conveniences in Silver Street, the provision and emptying of dog bins in the town, support for the Farmers' Market (held monthly), management of the allotments, the publication during the year of a regular newsletter containing information about activities in the town and grants to local organisations for activities such as the Christmas Lights and Stony Live! We also continue our support for the two-year memorandum with Thames Valley Police for the appointment of a Police Community Support Officer. There is also funding from the Town Council towards the work of the Neighbourhood Action Group, an important community resource for liaison with the police to improve safety in our town.

In recent years, our precept has risen to match growing expenditure. We have supported – and continue to do so – the bid to enter Britain in Bloom, recognising the commitment of the town to maintaining a pleasant environment for residents and visitors alike. We have established a website for the town. We have also agreed to set aside 10.6% of our precept annually for grants to local organisations wishing to run events or activities to help the community. If you wish to apply for support, forms can be obtained from our clerk.

In November, we debated the question of a rise in the precept for 2010/2011. As a Council we have always sought to respect the aspirations of our community and to raise funds appropriately. For the year 2009/10, we undertook a rigorous review of all our budgeted expenditure and were able not to increase the precept. For the coming year, we have agreed to raise our precept by 3%. We believe that this reflects our commitment to the community over the two years to provide value for money for the precept payer.

Next year's income and expenditure are listed below:

Income		Expenditure	
Precept	127636	Public toilets	17456
Reserves	2943	PCSO	16532
Interest	30	Britain in Bloom	7500
Farmers Market	3000	Other projects	14568
Allotment	1750	Grant funds	13500
		Publicity	8550
		Staff costs	36810
		Administration costs	10255
		Members allowances	7938
		Other costs	2250
Total	135359	Total	135359

The Town Council precept for the year is £47.30 for a property in Band D of the Council Tax. In real terms, this amounts to £0.91 per week per property spent directly on the needs of Stony Stratford.

The Town Council aims to respond to the needs of local residents and to work in partnership with the community and its organisations. During the last year, for example, we have been represented on the Stony Futures Group helping to identify projects to be supported through the Market Towns Initiative.

We meet monthly either in full council or in committee meetings at Russell Street School, the Watling Way Centre at Galley Hill and the Rowans Centre on Fullers Slade. Our meetings are advertised on the notice boards around the town, in the Town Crier and on our website: www.stonystratford.gov.uk. They always begin with an opportunity for members of the public to make a comment or contribution about issues of concern. Please do not hesitate to contact us to find out more about the Town Council's activities.

Best wishes

Robert Gifford
Chair
Stony Stratford Town Council

