

**PRESS RELEASE*PRESS RELEASE*PRESS RELEASE* PRESS RELEASE*PRESS RELEASE*PRESS RELEASE*
2020/2021 BUDGET**

Ross-on-Wye Town Council has approved its budget for the next financial year, it continues to put the provision of services and community enhancement at the heart of its plans.

The Council voted unanimously to accept the budget recommendations, put forward by each of the committees, for the day to day running costs of the Council's assets and services, and capital funding for special projects e.g. the recently refurbished Rope Walk Playground. This year particular emphasis is being put on enhancing the environment, supporting artistic and cultural events, and encouraging tourism. The Council's ambition is to support our lively market town.

The Council has listened to residents and is committed to deliver services fairly and efficiently, whilst making wise use of natural and financial resources and reducing its CO2 footprint following the declaration of a climate emergency.

The Council made a renewed commitment to recognise its responsibilities to maintain its assets and amenities for the benefit of the Town, to provide a clean and vibrant environment for residents, visitors and workers.

The Council accepted the need to make a small increase in its precept in line with the cap imposed by central government to all principal authorities of 2%. The budget reflects expenditure to maintain its assets such as the open spaces along the riverside, the markets, public toilets, Homs Road car park, The Corn Exchange and the Market House, which completed phase 1 of its renovations last Summer.

The Council has set aside £25K towards its aim of improving tourism and enable it to access significantly more external funding.

The Council continues to support community and voluntary groups such as the Town Carnival and Enviroability through grant funding and invites applications from 'not for profit' organisations for the Community Grant Scheme. In addition, it has supported the delivery of 1-2-1 advice services delivered through the CAB and has financed the town's CCTV. These are regarded as valuable ways the Council can support the health and well-being of the town's residents.

The annual expenditure budget was set at £563,478 with a precept request of £515,328. This represents on a Band D Council tax bill a rise of about £2.57 annually per household, making a total Band D of £131.24 which goes directly to the Town Council.

The Town Council remains committed to working in an open and transparent way and welcomes views from all sectors of the community. Every formal meeting is open to members of the public to come and address the Council and regular Councillor surgeries at the Library on Saturdays, between 10am and 11am, provide an opportunity for further engagement.

Sarah Robson
Town Clerk

11th February 2020