

**Wiltshire Council**

**Council**

**25 February 2020**

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**From Councillor Edward Kirk – Trowbridge Adcroft**

**To Councillor Richard Clewer – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-Civilian Integration**

**Question (20-10)**

Trowbridge Town Council has both a substantial debt with the Public Works Loan Board of £5.6 million (more than any other Town or Parish in the Country), and an annual cost for staff salaries, pension and NI of £1.7 million. The Trowbridge Town Council Precept in 2019/20 was set at £153.98 for a band D property, while neighbouring villages, like Hilperton have a Precept of only £14.28.

The new approved housing developments in Trowbridge will regrettably remove much of the green space between our Town and Villages (Hilperton, Southwick, North Bradley and West Ashton). Therefore, as we are now all joining together and sharing services in becoming part of a larger district of Trowbridge, we should also share the cost and have a combined Trowbridge & District Precept of £124.49 (Band D). Please can the Cabinet Member confirm how this fairer funding principle can be achieved?

**Response**

Parish and Town Councils have responsibility for setting their own precept and would need to consider the level of precept annually. This would then come into effect from 1 April each year.

If Parish and Town Councils wished to share the cost of services and a combined Trowbridge and District Precept they would have to consider a community governance review, the terms of reference which should include consideration of boundaries of existing parishes.