

Salisbury City Council Statement of the Area Board – Thu 9 Mar 2023

Salisbury City Council begins 2023 on a positive footing with an ambitious programme of work across all areas.

Our events teams are busy getting ready for the year ahead, commencing the season with St George's Day in April. Our partnership work across the city goes from strength to strength and we are looking forward to a bustling city celebrating the Coronation over the weekend of 6,7,8 May.

Our twice weekly Charter Fair has emerged from the winter trading well, and the Market is busy and vibrant part of the city.

Our communities team continue to support residents during these difficult times. The Pantry continues to support those at need and intends to increase opening hours later this year.

Our environmental team is committed to meeting our net zero carbon targets by 2030. We are changing our vehicles to electric and hybrid, we are creating a new wild meadow, and will be introducing further recycling bins to the city.

In all areas we continue to work as efficiently as possible whilst trying to maximise revenue: projects such as investing in hard-standing at the Camping and Caravanning site, for example, will enable more bookings all year around.

The council set its budget in January for 23/24, agreeing a precept rise of £102 per year. This means that those who pay Band D tax council will pay £335 per year, and those at Band C will pay £297.78, Band B £260.56 and Band A £223.33. Within the City 60% of properties are Band D and below, with the most numerous Band being Band C. This is a balanced budget for the first time in several years where our income exceeds our expenditure without the use of reserves and loans. The council has limited the rise in its expenditure to 3% in 23/24 by careful and prudent efficiency which maintains our core services. Although the rise in the precept has generated discussion, we are confident that this budget is a fair deal for the residents of the City; it protects the services they enjoy and need, and puts the City Council in a solid financial position for future years.

We are delighted that the in-housing of the ground's maintenance and street cleaning staff from Idverde to SCC has gone smoothly. We are coming up to having a full-strength team and our new workers are working well in their new teams. Overall, we estimate that if we had continued with Idverde that the contract would have cost circa £1M in 23/24. We expect the cost of providing this service in house to be £1.13M. The extra costs arise in part due to SCC's commitment to the use of electric vehicles (unlike Idverde), as part of the Environmental Policy delivery plan as developed and agreed cross party, and also bringing the Idverde workers onto the Foundation Living Wage in line with all of SCC workers. As well as increasing the flexibility and quality of service provided by our grounds and street scene teams, the insourcing of these teams provides opportunities for revenue generation in future years.