



LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday 12th January 2016

To: All Members of the Finance Committee:
Councillors Bartlett, Barton, Davies, Evans, Gibson, Marsh, Norman, A
Pendleton, R Pendleton, Rosser and Rumsey.
(Copies to other Councillors for information)

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Finance Committee** to be held on **Monday 18th January 2016** commencing at **19:00 hours** in the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

Paul Russell
TOWN CLERK

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Town Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are acceptable.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.
- 3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**
To consider requests for dispensations (must be notified in writing).
- 4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (maximum 15 minutes)**
To receive questions and statements from members of the public as provided for in Standing Orders
- 5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 7th December 2015 (**attached**).



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6. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (a) **Financial Report** – Please see the attached financial report for December 2015.
- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – A list of outstanding accounts for payment for January 2016 to date will be presented to the meeting.
- (c) **Consultation Report** – Please see the attached report outlining the results of the recent budget consultation.
- (d) **Budget & Precept 2016/17** – To consider the revised budget for 2016/17 and consider recommendation to Full Council.
- (e) **11 Corn Square** – To receive a verbal update regarding the purchase of this property.
- (f) **Ellis Whittam** – To formally agree to enter into a 3 year contract with Ellis Whittam to provide Health & Safety and Human Resources advice. Annual fee will be £2,500 without change for 3 years. A copy of the quotation has been provided to members for information.

7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Certain items are expected to include the consideration of exempt information and the Finance Committee is, therefore, recommended to resolve "That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".

- (a) **Council & Staffing Review** – To receive an update on the progress of this project.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Next Finance Committee meeting will be held on Monday 22nd February 2016 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 7th December 2015 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Norman (Chair), R Pendleton (Vice Chair), Bartlett, Barton, Davies, Evans, Marsh, A Pendleton, Rosser and Rumsey.

ALSO PRESENT: Ward Cllr McCaull.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

F41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Gibson.

F42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Thee following Declarations of Interest was made:

- Cllr Rosser: Social Care worker.

F43 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

F44 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions raised.

F45 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2015 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

F46 FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Financial Report – Committee considered the financial report for November 2015 and, following discussion, it was **RESOLVED:**

- That the report be noted;
- That the payments made in November 2015 amounting to £35,257.81 inclusive of VAT be ratified;
- That income received in November amounting to £9,192.98, which included the VAT refund, be ratified;
- That Petty Cash transactions for November amounting £88.50 be ratified;
- That the current balance as at 30th November 2015 of £262,154 be ratified;
- That the projected underspend for 2015/16 of £2,376 be noted.

Committee considered the budget monitoring report in detail. It was noted that a number of cost centres such as Telecom and Broadband were overspent.

This was due to incomplete information being available when the original budget was drafted. These items had been revised for 2016/17.

It was reported that some of the Festive Lights were not functioning correctly

- (b) **Outstanding Accounts for Payment** – Following consideration Committee **RESOLVED** to pay all the outstanding accounts to date for December 2015 amounting to £11,228.78 inclusive of VAT.
- (c) **Draft 5 Year Budget & Business Plan** – Committee **NOTED** the initial overview of responses received to date from the Budget consultation. The consultation closed on Monday 14th December 2015 and a full report would be drawn up prior to the Christmas holidays and sent to all Members. The results would also feed into the revised budget.

It was agreed that the results of the consultation would form the main body of the Town Council's Leominster News submission for January 2016.

- (d) **11 Corn Square** – Committee was informed that the instruction notice to dispose of the building by Herefordshire Council would be actioned as soon as it had been signed off by the Lead Cabinet Member. This was expected within the next few days.

It was requested that the options relating to Leominster Library be placed on the next Full Council agenda for discussion and clarification.

F47 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

As certain items were expected to include the consideration of exempt information and the Finance Committee **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- (a) **Grant Applications** – Committee considered the grant report and following an in-depth discussion it was **RESOLVED**:
- That the report be noted;
 - That a grant of £2,400 be awarded to HVOSS to continue the youth project at Baron's Cross until the 31st March 2016;
 - That discussions are held with HVOSS and other youth service providers to develop youth provision within Leominster;
 - That a budget allocation is included in the 2016/17 budget to help fund youth provision in Leominster;
 - That consideration be given to delivering some youth services directly by Leominster Town Council.
- (b) **Council & Staffing Review** – Committee considered the quotation received to carry out a full Council and Staffing review.

Following an in-depth discussion it was **RESOLVED:**

- That the report be noted;
- That the Council and Staffing review be carried out;
- That Chris Rolley Associates be appointed to carry out both the staffing and Council review at the cost outlined in the submitted Request for Quotation paperwork.

F48 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next Finance Committee meeting would be held on Monday 18th January 2016 at 19:00 at the Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP.

There being no other business the Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8:55pm.

CHAIR:

DATE:



Finance Committee

Date: 12th January 2016

Title: Financial Report

Purpose of the Report: To provide Members with a full Financial Report for December 2015.

Contact Officers: Paul Russell

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the report be noted;
- 1.2 To ratify the payments for December 2015 amounting to £21,639.59 inclusive of VAT.
- 1.3 To note income received and current balances for the 2015/16 financial year.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This Financial Report provides details of all Leominster Town Council's financial activities during November 2015.
- 2.2 The report provides details of current balances held at the bank including Earmarked Reserves (EM) and estimated projected expenditure for the remainder of the financial year based on current monthly income and expenditure.
- 2.3 It should be noted that all account transactions detailed below include VAT where applicable. VAT is claimed back every quarter by the Town Council under relevant legislation.

3. PAYMENTS MADE

- 3.1 Listed below are the payments made in December 2015:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Details</u>
01/12/2015	Herefordshire Council	DDHCDEC01	£128.00	Rates West Street
01/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC03	£77.01	Telecom
02/12/2015	Post Office	VISADEC1	£16.38	Stamps
04/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC01	£15.60	Broadband
07/12/2015	James Layton Electrical	402233	£262.68	Light Fittings

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07/12/2015	Arrow Plant & Tool Hire Ltd	402234	£2,884.08	Equipment Hire Allots
07/12/2015	Cartridge World	402235	£37.50	Printer Cartridges
07/12/2015	Vision ICT Ltd	402236	£66.00	.gov.uk fee
07/12/2015	BOSS Ltd	402237	£37.34	Copier
07/12/2015	Leominster Building Supplies	402238	£160.18	Miscellaneous
07/12/2015	Purecleans	402239	£40.00	Window Cleaning
07/12/2015	Leominster Team Ministry	402240	£57.60	Service Sheets
07/12/2015	Sentinel Security Systems	402241	£61.80	Alarm System
07/12/2015	Microshade VSM	402242	£84.60	Citrix Hosting
07/12/2015	HVOSS	402244	£3,037.00	Youth Grant
07/12/2015	Leominster Tourism CIC	402246	£2,000.00	TIC Grant December
07/12/2015	Leominster District Community	402247	£2,500.00	Grant LDCA Final
07/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC02	£181.20	Telecom
09/12/2015	Post Office	VISADEC02	£99.34	Stamps
10/12/2015	Herefordshire Council	DDHCDEC02	£170.00	Rates Toilets
10/12/2015	Caldicott Property	DDDECCAL01	£40.00	Allot Rent
11/12/2015	BNP Paribas	DDDECBNP01	£285.12	Copier
11/12/2015	nPower	DDNPDEC	£174.03	Electricity West St
14/12/2015	Salaries Dec 2015	402248-252	£4,893.94	Salary Dec 15
14/12/2015	Post Office	402253	£1,840.70	HMRC
14/12/2015	HallCellar Ltd	402254	£40.00	Christmas Reception
14/12/2015	Herefordshire Council	402255	£50.00	Barrier Hire
14/12/2015	Market Management	402256	£432.00	Market Costs
14/12/2015	Roundabout Stationery	402257	£37.96	Stationery
14/12/2015	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd	402258	£830.84	Allotments
14/12/2015	Travis Perkins Trading Co Ltd	402243	£744.25	Allotment Upgrade
15/12/2015	FuelGenie	DDFGDEC	£124.40	Fuel
18/12/2015	ICO	DDICO	£35.00	ICO Registration
21/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC05	£15.60	Telecom
22/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC06	£10.20	Telecom
22/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC07	£45.60	Telecom
29/12/2015	Caldicott Property	DDCALDEC02	£40.00	Allotment Rent
31/12/2015	British Telecommunications plc	DDBTDEC08	£83.64	Telecom
		TOTAL	£21,639.59	

3.2 Listed below is a list of income received in December 2015:

Date	From	Details	Amount
04/12/2015	Co-op Bank	Interest	£33.44
04/12/2015	Market Income	Market Income	£443.00
11/12/2015	Market Income	Market Income	£457.50
18/12/2015	Market Income	Market Income	£477.50
22/12/2015	Market Income	Market Income	£74.00
31/12/2015	Market Income	Market Income	£100.00
		TOTAL	£1,585.44

3.3 Listed below are all the Petty Cash Transactions for December 2015:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Ref:</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Details</u>
05/12/2015	Morrisons	PC64	£44.25	Hospitality
10/12/2015	Cllr Thomas	PC65	£18.50	Expenses
17/12/2015	One Stop Print Shop	PC66	£6.00	Poster
23/12/2015	Post Office	PC67	£7.56	Stamps
	TOTAL		£76.31	

3.4 Listed below are the balances at the bank as at 31st December 2015:

Bank Balances	
As at 31 st December 2015	
Current Account	£235,611
Unpresented Cheques	£116
Outstanding receipts	£100
Petty Cash	£45
	£235,640
Outstanding VAT Claim	£7,254
Total Balances	£242,894
Represented by:	
Current Year Fund	£119,908
General Reserves	£62,986
Earmarked Reserves	£60,000
Total Balances	£242,894

3.5 Outlined below The projected surplus/deficit as at 31st March 2016. Column one indicates the source of income/expenditure, column two is actual income/expenditure to date and column three includes projected income/expenditure as at 31st March 2016:

Projected Costs		
As at 31 st December 2015		
	Actual	Projected
Income	Dec-15	Mar-16
Precept	£275,819	£275,869
Support Grant	£40,981	£40,477
Interest	£247	£300
Donations	£110	£110
Allotments	£5,418	£5,400
Markets	£16,371	£19,000
NDP Refund	£8,920	£8,920
Grant Refund	£450	£450
Open Spaces	£3,780	£8,000
TOTAL	£352,096	£358,526

Expenditure	Actual	Projected
Administration	£81,037	£116,000
Allotments	£4,365	£4,800
Community Projects	£9,536	£29,000
Council Offices	£4,569	£9,000
Grants	£52,193	£67,000
Open Spaces	£23,706	£27,000
Civic	£2,727	£7,800
Town Enhancements	£7,534	£11,000
Capital	£13,629	£16,500
Devolved Services	£8,972	£28,000
Earmarked Reserves	£23,920	£40,000
TOTAL	£232,188	£356,100

3.6 Current projections continue to suggest that Council will have a small surplus of £2,400 as a direct savings on its original budget projections.

3.7 Attached is a report that is generated by the Finance Software that outlines provides a budget monitoring overview. Currently there are no significant overspends identified under the main cost centre headings. However, within those cost centres a significant overspend has been identified under Telephone and Broadband (4025/110), Gas costs at 17 West Street (4183/180), Allotments and some Open Spaces expenditure, although there is some income to be received with regard to open spaces. There was an agreed overspend under Capital Projects on the Priory Church Wall of just under £4,000.

4. ASSET REGISTER

4.1 As part of the annual financial review the Town Council has agreed to update its asset register. This is more relevant at this time due to the number of additional capital purchases Council has made during the 2015/16 year as a consequence of setting up the Environmental Team.

4.2 This work will be undertaken in February 2016 and a revised asset register will be presented to Committee at its meeting on 22nd February 2016.

5. AUDIT REPORT UPDATE

5.1 Members will recall that an audit report was submitted for action following both the internal and external audit for the 2014/15 financial year. The table below outlines progress to date:

ISSUE IDENTIFIED	ACTION	UPDATE
The Council has not taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from the external auditor.	Present full report to both the Finance Committee and Full Council for consideration.	Initial report presented to Full Council on 28/09/15

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Fixed assets had been re-valued and all fixed assets were to be valued at cost in future.	All fixed assets would be valued at cost. The asset register of Council would be reviewed and updated as appropriate. A report would be submitted to the Finance Committee for adoption at its meeting on 23 rd November 2015.	Revised asset register currently being developed. A revised register will be considered by the Finance Committee on 22/02/2016. Initial target missed.
The Council had not kept accurate minutes.	This concern had now been addressed and Council maintained full and accurate minutes which were considered at each meeting and by Full Council on a monthly basis.	Completed. Minutes monitored by both Full Council and the relevant Committee at each meeting.
There was no internal controls document.	An Internal Controls Document would be developed and considered by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 23 rd November 2015.	Initial target missed. An internal controls document was being developed and would be considered on 22/02/2016.
External audit report was not discussed at Full Council.	This report would be laid before Council for consideration and adoption at its meeting on Monday 28 th September 2015	Actioned on 28/09/2015
Response to assertion 7 on Section 2 of the annual return was not accurate which states that Council took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external auditors	By actioning the above items Council will be able to respond positively with confidence when it submits its End of Year annual return for 2015/16.	To be actioned at the year end.

5.2 The following issues had been raised in the Internal Auditor's report:

ISSUE IDENTIFIED	ACTION	UPDATE
Risk Management	<p>To identify a suitable person to provide cover if the RFO is absent for extended periods of time.</p> <p>Council will be reviewing its staffing structure and is developing a Business Continuity Plan. Back-up and additional cover plans will be outlined in this document which will be placed before Full Council for consideration and adoption before</p>	<p>Full staffing review currently being undertaken. This will be actioned and in place by 1st April 2016.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plan adopted by Emergency Planning Committee.</p>

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	then end of the 2015/16 financial year	
Income Controls	Recommended the provision of a receipt book for market rent collection. This has now been actioned and a process is in place.	Receipt book now in place and numbered. Market Officer uses on a weekly basis.
Payroll	This function has now been outsourced to a local accountancy company to ensure full compliance with relevant legislation and increase office capacity.	Function outsourced.
Assets	A revised asset register is being developed	To be considered on 22/02/2016
Bank Reconciliation	The number of un-presented cheques has now been addressed. Where appropriate those amounts have been written off and the cheques cancelled.	Now actioned. Continually monitored on a quarterly basis. At the end of December 2015 only 3 cheques were un-presented.
Cash Reserves	These have increased mainly due to a number of outstanding capital projects such as the Priory Wall. Future balances will be earmarked for future expenditure and a rolling programme to address equipment maintenance and replacement is to be introduced.	Balances have increased and monthly update on financial position presented to the Finance Committee.
Staffing	Advice has been sought regarding the management of the market and the current agreement in place is satisfactory. A full staffing review will be undertaken during the 2015/16 financial year to ensure that the Council has the capacity to meet additional demands and ensure that those in its employ are properly remunerated.	Consultant been appointed to carry out full staffing review. Report to be completed by the beginning of February 2016
Cash Collection	Currently this is carried out by the Market Manager and banked immediately. A Lone Worker Policy is in place and will be reviewed by Committee in due course.	Advice to be sought from Ellis Whittam.
Purchase Ledger	This has now been purchased and will be used once training has been undertaken.	Purchased but not yet being used.

	The financial reporting to Council is constantly being improved and this will continue.	
Spoiled Cheques	<p>This issue has been addressed as far as it can. However, as cheques are handwritten there will inevitably be mistakes.</p> <p>Consideration may be given in the future to paying by BACS. Internet banking has now been organised and a training session for members will take place during the Autumn.</p>	<p>The number of spoiled cheques have reduced.</p> <p>BACS and internet payments to be implemented by 1st vApril 2016 if possible.</p>
Bank Mandate	This has now been updated and includes both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. In addition a Debit Card has been obtained for the Clerk.	Updated and in place.
Tourist Information Centre	New Board Members have now been appointed and registered. The shareholding asset to the Town Council is £1,007 in 2015 as stated in the CIC's accounts. The future management of the TIC is under review.	Future is part of the Council and staffing review currently being undertaken. Public support to continue service.

6. INTERNET BANKING

- 6.1 The Town Council now has access to internet banking from the Co-operative Bank.
- 6.2 As yet the payment of accounts will continue to be carried out via Direct Debits and cheques probably until the commencement of the new financial year.
- 6.3 Training will be provided in the next few months to Members who will enable internet banking to be used to its full potential and reduce the requirement to write cheques. There will be a small time saving element but otherwise costs will not be affected.

7. LONE WORKER POLICY

- 7.1 Committee requested that a Lone Worker Policy be developed. Subsequent to the agreement to enter into a three year contract with Ellis Whittam at a cost of £2,500 per annum plus VAT for HR and H&S advice and support a new Staff Handbook will be produced as well as a significantly revised Health & Safety policy. This will include a Lone Worker policy.
- 7.2 There will be a number of other policies developed as part of this process with professional advice and support being provided when required.



Finance Committee

Date:	12th January 2015
Title:	Consultation Report
Purpose of the Report:	To provide Members with an assessment of the budget consultation that closed on 14th December 2015.
Contact Officers:	Paul Russell

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the report be noted;
- 1.2 That the results of the consultation be used to help direct future funding.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Leominster Town Council launched a budget consultation on 17th November 2015 following the development of a draft five year budget and business plan. The consultation aimed to provide a general snapshot overview of whether the proposals put forward by the Town Council had any level of support.
- 2.2 The consultation was launched at a public meeting held on 17th November 2015 in the Royal Oak Function Room. Two further consultation events were held on the Friday Market on 27th November and 11th December 2015.
- 2.3 In total 145 responses were received of which 144 completed the questionnaire and one submitted comments and queries on the main document. The majority of responses were generated from the Community Centre in School Lane and a number from the TIC.
- 2.4 Approximately 30 responses were received from the two market stall consultation events and the public meeting.
- 2.5 The consultation and all the supporting documentation were available in hard copy or online on the town Council's website. 7 responses were received electronically.
- 2.6 The following report provides a general overview following an assessment of the responses.
- 2.7 The main questionnaire is included in Appendix One

3. GENERAL OVERVIEW

3.1 The following table indicates the responses received:

	Yes	No	No Opinion	No answer	Total
Q1	115	5	13	11	144
Q2	129	4	6	5	144
Q3	86	20	29	9	144
Q4	108	12	10	14	144
Q5	113	7	18	6	144
Q6	127	3	14	0	144
Q7	70	38	26	10	144
Q8	88	21	27	8	144
Q9	115	9	14	6	144
Q10	85	25	27	7	144
Q11	69	31	24	20	144

3.2 The table below outlines the percentages of the responses contained in 3.1:

	Yes	No	No Opinion	No Answer
Q1	79.86%	3.47%	9.03%	7.64%
Q2	89.58%	2.78%	4.17%	3.47%
Q3	59.72%	13.89%	20.14%	6.25%
Q4	75.00%	8.33%	6.94%	9.72%
Q5	78.47%	4.86%	12.50%	4.17%
Q6	88.19%	2.08%	9.72%	0.00%
Q7	48.61%	26.39%	18.06%	6.94%
Q8	61.11%	14.58%	18.75%	5.56%
Q9	79.86%	6.25%	9.72%	4.17%
Q10	59.03%	17.36%	18.75%	4.86%
Q11	47.92%	21.53%	16.67%	13.89%

3.3 Depending on whether you use the total population (approx. 11,700), the electorate (8,903) or the number of households (5,624) the response rate fluctuates between 1.23%, 1.62% and 2.56%.

3.4 The table below indicates the priorities as a result of this consultation exercise:

Priority	Question	% Support
1	Maintenance of toilets within the town at Grange, Central, Westbury St and Broad St	89.58%
2	Continuation of Community Centre grant	88.19%
3=	Continue funding maintenance of the Grange, Sydonia, Ginhall Green and Priory Gardens	79.86%

3=	Development of the Market in Corn Square	79.86%
5	Support the continuation of the TIC grant	78.47%
6	Complimentary Street cleaning service in the centre of town	75.00%
7	Support of civic events and festivals in the town	61.11%
8	Upgrade of toilets in Q2	59.72%
9	Support continuation of CCTV provision	59.03%
10	Support a proactive role in Leominster in Bloom	48.61%
11	Support Christmas Lights provision	47.92%

3.5 The more interesting responses were the proposals which received a definite negative. The table below highlights the least popular proposals:

Least Popular	Question	% No
1	Support a proactive role in Leominster in Bloom	26.39%
2	Support Christmas Lights provision	21.53%
3	Support continuation of CCTV provision	18.75%
4	Support of civic events and festivals in the town	14.58%
5	Upgrade of toilets in Q2	13.89%
6	Complimentary Street cleaning service in the centre of town	8.33%
7	Support the continuation of the TIC grant	4.86%
8	Development of the Market in Corn Square	6.25%
9	Continue funding maintenance of the Grange, Sydonia, Ginhall Green and Priory Gardens	3.47%
10	Maintenance of toilets within the town at Grange, Central, Westbury St and Broad St	2.78%
11	Continuation of Community Centre grant	2.08%

3.6 The consultation provided a useful guide as to whether the Town Council had identified the correct priorities. Based on the questionnaire and the projects identified, only two projects received less than 50% support. In the case of the Christmas lights nearly 14% of respondents did not answer the question possibly because it was on page two and many who did not provide additional comments may not have turned over the page.

3.7 Much of the negativity with both the Christmas Lights and Leominster in Bloom funding was based on the fact that respondents thought that either more fundraising should be undertaken or businesses should provide more financial support.

3.8 There were a number of comments submitted regarding the proposals. An initial response to each item has been included where appropriate in an effort to ensure that the concern has a factual basis and whether it is in the remit of the Town Council to address. The table below provides further details. Please note that in some cases the concerns have been précised:

AGENDA ITEM 6(c)

Comments	Re sponse	
1	Parking charges are a disadvantage to locals and visitors alike	Herefordshire Council owns the car parks. The Town Council has no control over parking charges although it has submitted alternative charges which have been adopted by HC
2	Do not support money spent on Civic events	LTC is obliged to support some civic events such as Remembrance, Mayor Making etc. Most of the costs are incurred in Officer time and room hire
3	Support CCTV when it's working	Contact CCTV operators to ensure cameras are operational at all times. Improved communications with CCTV operator is being developed
4	Please make sure it is Council funding Christmas Lights because impression is people were raising funds for them	Need to improve LTC communication
5	Need to keep town clean and pretty	LTC has directed funding towards ensuring this objective is achieved.
6	Keep toilets open for visitors who are very important to Leominster	High level of support for public toilets. Funding is included in future budgets. Improvements are being reviewed.
7	Community Centre important to respondent and ECHO as venue where many activities are held. Participants feel safe in centre and part of the local community.	LTC fully committed to support LDCA. Task & Finish Group appointed to help provide assistance to develop a business plan and reduce reliance on grant funding.
8	Thinks Leominster should be the same as Hereford. Hereford does not have TIC or flowers and others have to do this.	More support indicated to retain the TIC in Leominster
9	Hereford does not have a TIC. Why should Leominster?	More support indicated to retain the TIC in Leominster
10	My husband and I would like to keep the library/Council Offices in Leominster because it is a very useful facility.	LTC fully supports retention of library in Leominster and is working with HC to ensure its future.

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11	It would be ideal to itemise each category so the public would understand why each one costs the amount stated.	Reason for the consultation was so that the public could identify priorities
12	Support LiB, festivals and Christmas lights but amounts suggested are excessive. More to be done to get local businesses to contribute more.	LTC will review budget allocations for all the services it supports.
13	Support an increase in precept to cover additional costs	Current projections suggest an increase in precept. Support for that increase is very welcome.
14	Community Centre provides invaluable support and entertainment to the Community as a whole. £10k per annum is so much appreciated to keep this wonderfully worthwhile facility and its excellent staff available to a very grateful public. Thank you.	LTC fully committed to support LDCA. Task & Finish Group appointed to help provide assistance to develop a business plan and reduce reliance on grant funding.
15	Parks & public toilets to be protected as fundamental facility for the people of Leominster	LTC has committed funding and support to ensure retention and investment
16	Community Centre is an important hub for events in the community. Spaces where we can gather are important otherwise there is no community. It also provides an important space for advice and services such as counselling and complimentary therapies. Definitely support	LTC fully committed to support LDCA. Task & Finish Group appointed to help provide assistance to develop a business plan and reduce reliance on grant funding.
17	Support events such as Leominster Festival which brings people together and gives town a sense of identity and something to celebrate. Tourism boost too	LTC allocated funding towards these initiatives
18	Support TIC because it's a facility to help explore Leominster and supports local businesses and craftspeople.	LTC plans to support TIC and improve value for money by taking service in-house, discontinuing annual rent of premises (£11k) and provide improved access and support.

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19	Development of street market good idea but maybe difficult to sustain.	Currently the market is developing and becoming more popular. Added investment may not see initial increase in income but will improve sustainability and create an additional reason for people to visit Leominster town centre.
20	Keep up the good work!	We will try.
21	Assume exercise is to increase council tax which is fine by me if we keep these amenities listed	LTC aims to retain all services identified. Following consultation there is support for it do continue to do so.
22	Not in favour of creating more jobs at the top i.e. someone in charge of someone in charge etc as has happened in the past. Spend money on Leominster community please.	LTC to carry out a staffing restructure to help improve service delivery. Posts will not be management. Currently LTC only has 49 hours per week administration capacity. This cannot be sustained.
23	Toilets: Yes for all except central. Questions need for Central car park toilet. Would reduce capital expenditure considerably	LTC is currently reviewing toilet provision. Proposal is to improve DDA unit in Central and create retail/storage unit using rest of the building.
24	Toilets require proper maintenance but investment at Broad Street and Westbury Street not required for at least 5 years.	Broad Street to remain under HC control in 2016/17. Westbury Street proposals are to reduce number of toilets, retain 2 units plus DDA and create an additional retail/storage unit.

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25	Is street cleaning a complementary service? If so complementary to what? If responsibility of HC then should be doing the job properly.	HC has reduced funding for services such as this. In future it will only be a reaction service. LTC received numerous complaints and introduced additional service which has proved very popular. Has also received significant support in consultation.
26	Support LiB but not at £10k per annum	LTC has agreed to water plants. 30% of the cost is man hours. Additional budget proposed is not reduced to £5k
27	TIC: Yes to continue but £30k is a huge subsidy. Is Council confident that if relocated in 11 Corn Square an income of £31k will be generated against an expenditure of £47K?	LTC trying to ensure subsidy is reduced. Hence proposal to relocate TIC in Corn Square.
28	Civic/Festival Events: Support but estimate too high	LTC originally wished to help support more festivals and events. LTC will review.
29	11 Corn Square: Proposed purchase is a "major step in the dark" financially taking into account West Street loan still has 2 years to run and there are existing buildings and charities that offer space to businesses/charities within town.	LTC has discussed purchase of building since July 2015. Business plan drawn up but needs amending following HC reluctance to sell part of Etnam Street car park. Proposal is to rehouse TIC, develop community hub and possibly consider relocation of library in the future if it is under threat.
30	Christmas Lights: Shops should pay	LTC to consider asking retailers to contribute.
31	Christmas Lights: Sponsorship	As above
32	Budget buster at Q10	LTC has received support to increase its precept to help save services
33	LiB: Sponsorship	This is being pursued
34	Toilet upgrade: Later on	This will be phased over the next 2-3 years. £100k indicative of possible costs.

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35	Presumes Council not able to fund all items. Would prefer preference of which services are priorities rather than yes/no format. Would like to see everything funded	LTC aims to try to fund all the services but some funding may be reduced especially related to grants.
36	Supports Christmas Lights but wonders whether some support from businesses available and not just those in town centre	Will be pursued
37	Funding that supports Health & Safety must continue i.e. street cleaning.	Funding and infrastructure in place.
38	Services which support tourists like LiB are important but can be done by volunteers and community groups	Many volunteers are already helping to keep costs down. Current TIC requires £30k grant per annum of which £11k is rental for premises. Hence LTC considers it better use of funds to purchase freehold of 11 Corn Square.
39	Christmas lights should, in part at least, be funded by shopkeepers as they are main beneficiaries.	Will be pursued
40	The Town Council seems to be doing a very good job of helping the town's attractiveness for residents and visitors.	It is trying.
41	Surely Herefordshire Council should be contributing more in support of the town	HC funding has been reduced by over 40% over the last 5 years and is facing a further 40% of cuts. It is not able to contribute hence loss of funding such as transitional grants.
42	More street lights in Sandpits and Pump Piece	Will request HC to look into this. Not an LTC responsibility
43	Potholes in Cheaton Close and Ridgemore estates	Will request HC to look into this. Not an LTC responsibility
44	Yes to all except CCTV. Present system is poor value. Needs a local checked set of monitors and an improved number in the right places	CCTV is being reviewed. 2016 is last year of current system and negotiations will take place to discuss future provision and costs.
45	Christmas Lights: Switched on only for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany	Difficult to achieve as it would require additional manpower which would probably be greater in cost than leaving the lights on for the Christmas period. Current cost about £500.

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46	Maintenance of public areas but reduce cuts to all but The Grange where grass to be kept short to encourage more community use.	Reduction in frequency of cuts being reviewed to try to reduce overall costs.
47	Encourage public to pick up litter and help maintain the town's environment. "Help to keep your Town clean"	LTC to consider revitalising current litter picking initiative which is held weekly and attracts many volunteers.
48	Public toilets to be reduced in number and charge 20p for use.	Charge has been considered. However, each coin machine costs £1,500 plus a cost to empty every evening. Payback is too long a period of time based on income projections.
49	Provide lorry drivers a shower facility at Broad Street but charge for use.	Currently being considered at Broad Street. Will be revisited in 2017/18
50	Encourage all take-aways to pick up litter outside their outlets (say 50m each way). Pizza boxes should be sized to fit through the holes of the cover of litter bins.	LTC to try to develop an initiative with local businesses
51	Public houses and offices to be encouraged to provide bins for smokers and be responsible for emptying them	LTC to try to develop an initiative with local businesses
52	Ask Leominster bus station to be like Hereford: Bus engines to be switched off when waiting for passengers. The shelters are the wrong side and collect the exhaust fumes for those waiting to breathe in. Worried school children who are using this service are having to breathe this every school day.	A request will be submitted to the bus companies and HC
53	Pedestrianisation of Corn Square between 10am and 4pm would improve the town enormously and improve trade for our shops (which need all the help we can give them to succeed against supermarkets!)	Part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Needs greater support
54	Pavements in the town are lethal, very uneven and dangerous. Knows several women who have tripped and broken bones as a result. This is not acceptable!!	LTC has begun working with HC to try to address this issue.
55	Pedestrianise Corn Square 10am to 4pm. This will cost nothing. A temporary sign in Victoria Street is all that is required!	Part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Needs greater support
56	Where a recipient can obtain grants from other sources the town council should not fund them	Noted
57	The only way to get more funding seems to be from the business rates if we can keep them. So we need to get more new businesses in the Enterprise Park, now mostly empty.	This has been pursued and it is unlikely that any level of business rate will be passed down to LTC by HC
58	I would not mind an increase in the precept for services. Congratulations to the town council for all its work and creativity in the face of severe cuts.	Thank you

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59	Priory needs support as it is a tourist attraction.	LTC to review. Already invested £23k in rebuilding Priory Wall in 2015.
60	Less money on Christmas Lights	LTC has allocated £3k less in 2016/17. Further reductions may be considered.
61	All services mentioned in questionnaire are necessary and a valuable asset to both local people and to visitors	LTC will try to support them all
62	When Town Council offices are relocated in 11 Corn Square could the library be accommodated there as well to ensure its survival	This has been suggested to HC and is currently being considered. Future of the library in its current location is secure for 2016/17 but there may be a requirement to move in the future. LTC fully supportive.
63	Could shops contribute to Christmas Lights? Eg Boots, Smiths, Wetherspoons etc	LTC to investigate
64	What civic events does Council support?	Mayor Making, annual civic service, Remembrance Day, Victorian Market and Christmas Lights Switch On. Mayor attends on average 3 functions a week on behalf of Leominster.
65	Please clean up the bus station boarding area. It is disgusting!	HC is responsible
66	Pedestrianise Corn Square as soon as possible	Part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Needs greater support
67	Keep on going.	We will try.
68	Upgrade Sydonia Park. More play areas	All play areas are part of LTC future investment plans
69	Think museum should be moved to Grange Court	This would be a matter for the Museum and LARC
70	Council offices to be moved to museum	LTC considering a move to 11 Corn Square.
71	Pavilion open	MiEnterprise is working towards this.
72	Use Grange more for the festival	Festival Committee responsibility. LTC happy to give permission.

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73	Useful to know monies available to Leominster TC for 2016/17	LTC is not capped and can raise enough funds to cover all its commitments. Hence consultation to find out what was important to local people.
74	Toilet Upgrade: Could these be carried out over a period of 3 to 5 years rather than £100k in one year?	It will be phased over a period to be agreed.
75	The Council to be commended for taking on these projects. Thank you to all involved	Thank you
76	With Government cutbacks coming to all there are grants available from Comic Relief and National Heritage that LTC could claim.	Parish and Town Councils are ineligible for many grant pots.
77	Leominster has many arguments in favour; a growing market town, high amounts of people on low incomes, low educational area, many disabled people.	LTC is trying to save essential services and support those that have been set up to help deliver these services.
78	Leominster is extremely behind the times. There are no clothing convenience shops, fast food chains, social groups for young people or indoor play areas/gyms for children	This is not in LTC remit. Has to be driven by the business community and through the planning process
79	The roads are full of potholes which cause endless problems with cars and traffic	LTC fully involved in Lengthsman scheme and currently fills potholes on U & C roads. HC and BBLP responsible for A & B Roads
80	Pavements are all very small and uneven which makes it unfriendly for wheelchair users, disabled people and people with pushchairs.	This may be addressed if funding can be drawn down to refurbish the town centre public realm. However, it is an historic town centre and these difficulties cannot always be addressed.
81	There is often dog fouling on pavements and there is always litter in the river	LTC has invested in 2 part time environmental operatives and equipment to try to address this. An educational programme also needs to be developed
82	Supports small local businesses in town centre	Economic projects include the market to improve footfall, the TIC to support tourism in the area, Christmas lights, Festivals, Events etc

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83	Housing costs and maintenance very poor quality for such high costs. Also lack of housing, jobs and training opportunities	Not in control of LTC
84	Bus and train costs are extortionate and unreasonably high.	Not in control of LTC
85	Leominster needs to be modernised whilst maintaining its valuable history	An ongoing project which requires the co-operation of many partners, both public and private. LTC will champion this.
86	Few prospects for young people, housing, employment, training, social activities etc. Would like to see more for the future generations but worried little will be done.	LTC intends to invest in youth provision in 2016/17 and will work with organisations to support any initiatives that may help address some of these issues.
87	Leominster is known as "dog poo" town locally. Need to look out for dog mess on pavements and potholes	LTC has invested in 2 part time environmental operatives and equipment to try to address this. An educational programme also needs to be developed
88	Roads and pathways are either too narrow or inadequate for people with disabilities, the elderly etc.	This may be addressed if funding can be drawn down to refurbish the town centre public realm. However, it is an historic town centre and these difficulties cannot always be addressed.
89	Cheap car parking would help attract people	Remit of HC. HC needs to raise additional revenue or cut services further.
90	Town has too many second hand/antique shops and charity shops. Need a clothes store families can afford.	Market driven and outside remit of LTC. Needs to be business driven
91	Poor public transport	LTC is trying to investigate ways to help support public transport but HC funding it and investment has subsequently reduced.
92	Young people and others feel isolated	LTC trying to invest in some youth provision to help address this
93	Leominster is expensive to live in.	Out of LTC remit.
94	Council should support all activities and events in the town to support the population and encourage tourism.	This is the aim of the LTC budget
95	Christmas lights could be funded as much as possible by local shops in town.	LTC to pursue

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96	Christmas lights once provided by the Chamber of Commerce	There is no Chamber of Commerce in Leominster. Needs to be business driven.
97	TIC is vital and could develop a commercial side with public transport booking office	LTC trying to support
98	Parking and inadequate post office driven shoppers out of town	Out of LTC remit.
99	Observations on planning matters to be properly supported by HC	LTC has a Committee set up to respond to all planning applications. Neighbourhood Plan has been developed. LTC has no planning powers and is NOT a statutory consultee
100	All options are essential even if it costs £200k+ to continue to have Leominster looking like a place that residents take a pride in and welcomes visitors. Volunteers should be encouraged.	LTC trying to support
101	Stop holding May Fun Fair. It is disruptive to shopping and parking on Fire Station car park	HC responsibility
102	Shocked and appalled that TC only contributed £10k to CCTV. Should be strongly supported. Christmas Lights only up for a few weeks yet budget is much higher than CCTV. Requests greater backing for CCTV.	LTC provides funding that is requested. New contract to be negotiated for 2016/17. Additional funding may be required.
103	Community toilets: If this idea adopted need to ensure good spread of providers not just pubs which open from 11am	Part of LTC overall strategy
104	Christmas Lights: Look nice this year but as retailers benefit do they pay anything towards them?	Retails make no contributions to Christmas Lights or maintenance and utilities.
105	Like to see Corn Square as a pedestrian area and remove parking permanently	Part of LANP
106	Action to provide better parking at Leominster railway station	Out of LTC remit.
107	Cleaning not just town centre but other areas particularly play areas	LTC would like to do this subject to cost and capacity.
108	Christmas Lights: we need better lights and more colour like the big garlands and coloured balls	New contract to be negotiated for 2016.
109	Not helped by ticking most boxes yes (need to save money) but most of activities make Leominster a good place to live and visit	LTC also considers services identified as required
110	Town has a negative image compared with Ludlow and yet has much to offer.	LTC wishes to invest in events and initiatives that will help improve the image and attraction of Leominster. The aim of the budget is to invest in the town's infrastructure

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111	Encourage and support events to attract residents and visitors and encourage economy to grow	LTC aims to support
112	TIC important for town and surrounding area. Take bookings for day trips. Important for Tourism industry and should be supported.	LTC aims to support
113	Toilets necessary but should be kept clean and safe and not expensively upgraded	LTC is reviewing its investment in the toilets and will invest as cost effectively as possible. However, public toilets need to have a higher specification as they receive greater use and are subject to vandalism.
114	HC should pay for street cleaning, LTC should take it over and receive a grant from HC to do the works.	HC does not have the funding though LTC has asked.
115	Continue to support the community centre. Provides important services to the town including cinema, relays of plays, yoga, pilates etc	LTC fully supports the community centre
116	LIB should be supported but not to the tune of £10k	LTC is reviewing its investment in Lib
117	No need to buy 11 Corn Square	Current offices not fit for purpose, Corn Square provides alternative site for library in future if required, a community hub is being developed and it will enable LTC to provide significant extra support to many organisations within Leominster.
118	£30k on TIC rising to £47k not sustainable. It is an optional extra. Projected income is fanciful as is business plan projections	All projections are based on current trading and have been reduced so would argue that they are not fanciful.
119	Concern that CAB closed in Leominster and closing in Herefordshire whilst LTC is funding TIC	CAB has significant funding issues. LTC happy to provide space at 11 Corn Square for CAB office in the future.
120	LTC funding for CAB inadequate to retain a presence in Leominster. Requests LTC to directly fund local CAB office.	LTC supportive of CAB but has to spread its support. CAB has not been in contact with LTC this financial year even though funding of £2k was provided.

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121	The 5 year budget plans put forward by Leominster Town Council (LTC), are, as taxpayers might expect them to be, a wish list from councillors for the things they want, rather than the things nearly 12000 people need	According to the responses received there is significant support for the projects outlined. TIC received significant support in the past.
122	4.2. The current system for calculating Council Tax, based upon the historic and arguable value of a property at a point in time, does not reflect the services provided to that property. Single occupants are effectively expected to subsidise properties with multiple occupants, something that the so called Poll Tax addressed so well. Revise Council tax and refer to MP	Not in control of LTC
123	As new houses build in Leominster will these be subject to S106 payments and will LTC derive any benefit?	Unlikely unless S106 is secured for services LTC has a legal ability to provide such as open spaces and play areas. The 1,500 homes proposed south of Leominster will not attract any S106 or CIL funding.
124	Purchase of 11 Corn Square should be cancelled. Whilst Council may desire better accommodation which may turn out to be cost neutral which cannot be guaranteed undertaking such a project during times of austerity cannot be justified. If Council NEEDS facility it should go ahead, if it WANTS it, it should be scrapped.	Council considers the purchase of 11 Corn Square to be fundamental to ensuring that local much needed services can be supported. No objections have been received until now. LTC considers Leominster will NEED this facility in the future and if it is surplus to requirements it can be sold off.
125	Why does LTC have to petition HC to recover business rates? Business rates should benefit the Council in which the businesses are based.	Town and Parish Councils are not eligible to receive business rates. This was stopped when the Poll Tax was introduced.
126	Section 5.3 to 5.9 re restructure is "nice to have" but true cost shown in precept requirement. Going it alone from HC cannot be justified by LTC	LTC has been "going it alone" since 1974 in its present guise. It is not part of HC and is an autonomous body which is currently proving very valuable to residents who wish to see services saved or improved.

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127	Amazed that Council recently leased new copier which may need replacing if LTC purchase 11 Corn Square	This is not what is contained in the document. There is no mention of replacement copier. It is suggested that a second copier might be required for potential users of 11 Corn Square and for the general public to use.
128	Financial projections for TIC are not viable. No confirmation that the TIC expenditure figures include £27k p/a staff costs. Taking TIC under LTC should be avoided. TIC valuable asset to those who derive an income from it but LTC does not so new income streams should be investigated for TIC	Financial projections for the TIC are based on current income and expenditure. The overall subsidy is projected to be reduced by 50% if relocated to Corn Square. If it is not then subsidy will increase due to pension changes and living wage implications.
129	Why doesn't LTC lease rather than purchase IT equipment with separate maintenance contract? Why does LTC go it alone rather than share IT systems with County?	LTC owns all its hardware. It currently runs all its IT via a Citrix log in which ensures safe storage off-site of electronic files and excellent business continuity. Relocation costs are also kept to a bare minimum as there is no server requirement.
130	Loss of Transitional Grant is not the main cause of increasing precept. It is the additional cost of admin and corporate management brought about by desire to expand LTC	The loss of the transitional grant would mean a 12% precept increase if LTC wished to stand still. The document does not suggest it is the main cause but one significant element.
131	Additional evidence that £30k grant to TIC cheaper than taking it in-house. £42k expenditure plus £27k salaries	These figures bear no relation to what is included in the documentation. It should be noted that the TIC CIC is wholly owned by LTC

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132	LTC and HC proposing to increase tax demands by percentages way above that working or retired people can expect to get in 2016 and beyond	Based on the overall Council Tax of £1,616.84 for a D Band property in Leominster in 2015/15 a £30 increase per annum is actually only a 1.86% increase
133	11 Corn Square appears to be a done deal so explanation to taxpayers who are going to fund it.	As stated in the documentation the cost of purchasing 11 Corn Square is cost neutral. Additional administration costs will have to be incurred to help deliver additional services.
134	Doubling the cost of market and events salaries not drawing in additional income. Explain advantages of increasing staff costs in this area.	The investment is in events rather than markets. Initially the income generation may not increase but it will have a positive economic benefit to businesses in Leominster
135	Proposed increase suggests LTC will ignore austerity and take on unproductive and financially unjustifiable projects	LTC is not ignoring austerity but trying to save valuable services as cost effectively as possible.
136	Budget proposals unjustified and not in the interests of Leominster taxpayers and must be rejected.	Support for LTC plans suggest otherwise.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 A good response was received regarding the consultation and the information has been left up on the website for information. Additional representations may well be received prior to Council setting its final budget and precept.
- 4.2 The positive news is that the majority of proposals put forward by the Town Council have received majority support from those who responded.
- 4.3 Due to the fairly short time scale it is suggested that future consultations be commenced earlier. This should be easier to achieve in the future if additional staff and capacity are secured.



LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

BUDGET QUESTIONNAIRE 2016/17

Leominster Town Council is seeking the views of local residents on its 2016/17 budget. The Town Council is keen to ensure that it protects services that residents, businesses and visitors would like saved, identify services that are not currently available so that these can be provided and discontinue services which no longer meet local needs.

1. The Town Council is currently funding the maintenance of The Grange, Sydonia, Ginhall Green and Priory Gardens. Annual cost approximately £30,000. Do you wish this to continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
2. The Town Council currently manages Grange Toilets and Central Car Park toilets. From 2016 onwards it will be managing Westbury Street toilets (bus station) and from 2017 onwards Broad Street toilets. Annual cost £50,000. Do you wish this to continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
3. The Town Council has plans to upgrade the toilets mentioned in Q2. Cost will be around £100,000 spread over 10 years. Do you support this?
 YES NO NO OPINION
4. The Town Council is currently providing a complimentary street cleaning service for the centre of town. Cost is approximately £20,000. Do you wish this to continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
5. The Town Council currently provides the Tourist Information Centre with a grant of £30,000 per annum. Do you wish to see the TIC continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
6. The Town Council currently provides the Community Centre with a grant of £10,000 per annum. Do you wish this to continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
7. The Town Council intends to take a proactive role in Leominster in Bloom. Cost will be approximately £10,000 per annum including the watering. Do you wish to support this initiative?
 YES NO NO OPINION
8. The Town Council supports a number of civic events and festivals in the town. Cost is approximately £20,000. Do you wish this to continue?
 YES NO NO OPINION
9. The Town Council wishes to develop the street market in Corn Square. Income generated will help subsidise other services. Do you wish to support this?
 YES NO NO OPINION
10. The Town Council currently supports CCTV in Leominster. Cost is approximately £10,000. Do you wish this to continue?

YES

NO

NO OPINION

11. The Town Council currently funds the Christmas Lights in the town. Cost is £15,000. Do you wish this to continue?

YES

NO

NO OPINION

12. Are there any other comments you wish to make? Please use the space below:

Please return your form to: The Town Clerk, Council Offices, 17 West Street, Leominster HR6 8EP or by email to townclerk@leominstertowncouncil.gov.uk by Monday 14th December 2015.



Full Council

Date: 12th January 2016

Title: Proposed Budget 2016/17 Report

Purpose of the Report: To provide Members with the final draft budget and precept requirement for 2016/17. Additional draft projections are also included for the following four years.

Contact Officers: Paul Russell

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the report be noted;
- 1.2 That Committee submits a formal recommendation to Full Council to enable it to formally adopt a budget and precept for 2016/17.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Leominster Town Council delayed formal consideration of its budget requirements for 2016/17 until it had carried out a full consultation on its proposals, received information regarding the Tax Base and agreed the way forward with regard to investing in its public conveniences.
- 2.2 Leominster's tax base for 2015/16 was 3,476.54. The 2016/17 tax base will be 3,525.99. Transitional Grant funding has been reduced from £40,361 to £17,993 with further support being discontinued from 1st April 2017.
- 2.3 The Estates, Markets and Environment Committee considered a report regarding public convenience investment at its meeting held on Monday 11th January 2016 and agreed to request an annual allocation of £55,000 to include any loan repayments and annual maintenance charges.
- 2.4 The draft budget has been under development since September 2015 with each Committee considering its own elements over that period. The final draft budget was consulted upon and a separate report outlines the outcome of that consultation.

3. THE DRAFT BUDGET

- 3.1 The following draft budget has been developed and is submitted to Committee for consideration:
- 3.2 Administration: An additional £500 has been included for recruitment from the original proposals.

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<u>Administration Central</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Recruitment	£0	£1,500	£500	£515	£530	£546
Advertising	£1,250	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Printing & Stationery	£1,100	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Photocopier	£1,200	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Postage	£1,500	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Subscriptions	£2,600	£3,000	£3,090	£3,183	£3,278	£3,377
Publications	£110	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Telephone	£2,000	£3,300	£3,399	£3,501	£3,606	£3,714
Software, IT and support	£1,500	£3,000	£3,090	£3,183	£3,278	£3,377
Equipment	£1,500	£3,000	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639
Insurance	£4,500	£6,000	£6,180	£6,365	£6,556	£6,753
Miscellaneous	£150	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Website	£2,500	£360	£371	£382	£393	£405
Contingency	£2,000	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652	£2,732	£2,814
Total	£21,910	£28,160	£26,370	£27,161	£27,976	£28,815

3.3 Administrative income is as follows:

<u>Income Administration</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Precept	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Council Tax Support Grant	£40,477	£17,993	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bank Interest	£150	£200	£175	£175	£175	£175
Miscellaneous	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£40,627	£18,193	£175	£175	£175	£175

3.4 Corporate Management cost projections are as follows. Please note that it is recommended that the Ellis Whittam contract be commenced as soon as possible:

<u>Corporate Management</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Salaries	£78,400	£100,000	£103,000	£106,090	£109,273	£112,551
Travel & Subsistence	£1,190	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Conferences/Training	£500	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Bank Charges	£0	£500	£515	£530	£546	£563
Accountancy/Corporate Governance	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Internal Audit Fees	£500	£800	£824	£849	£874	£900
External Audit Fees	£1,500	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Legal & Professional	£0	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Employment/Health & Safety	£0	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652
Total	£82,090	£110,800	£114,049	£117,395	£120,917	£124,545

3.5 Democratic Services: Election costs to be ring-fenced to pay for elections in 2019:

<u>Democratic Services</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Elections	£10,350	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500
Mayor's Allowance	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
Mayor Making	£250	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500

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Civic Events	£1,710	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Civic Regalia	£400	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500
Civic Officers	£1,100	£1,200	£1,236	£1,273	£1,311	£1,351
Total	£17,810	£10,700	£10,736	£10,773	£10,811	£10,851

3.6 Grants: The overall allocation has been increased by £5,000 to ensure that there is adequate funding available to other bodies. The £10,000 grant to the Community Centre received strong support in the public consultation and has therefore been included as a separate entity. Please note that the TIC grant of £30,000 has been discontinued as it is proposed to bring the delivery of this service in-house to achieve significant savings.

Grants	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
General Grants	£50,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000
Community Centre	£10,000	£10,000	£8,000	£6,000	£5,000	£4,000
Grange Court	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000
	£67,000	£32,000	£30,000	£28,000	£27,000	£26,000

3.7 Youth Funding: An additional expenditure line has been added to fund the proposed youth project in Leominster. The project would be delivered by HVOSS.

Youth Funding	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Youth Provision	£0	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£10,000
	£0	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£10,000

3.8 17 West Street: It is the Council's intention to retain ownership of this building and rent it out on the open market as soon as possible. Due to the sensitivity of this information details are not included. However, it is projected that this element will be cost neutral.

West Street	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Expenditure	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0

3.9 Corn Square Expenditure: All figures are indicative. The loss of the purchase of the car park has required a projected income reduction but income of around £26,000 should be achievable by 2017:

Corn Square	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Cleaning Materials	£0	£100	£103	£106	£109	£113
Window Cleaning	£0	£720	£742	£764	£787	£810
Electricity	£0	£4,000	£4,120	£4,244	£4,371	£4,502
Gas	£0	£4,500	£4,635	£4,774	£4,917	£5,065
Business Rates	£0	£10,000	£10,300	£10,609	£10,927	£11,255
Water Rates	£0	£1,200	£1,236	£1,273	£1,311	£1,351
Repairs & Renewals	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Fixtures & Fittings	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Loan Repayment	£0	£23,006	£22,817	£22,628	£22,439	£22,250
Total	£0	£47,526	£48,073	£48,641	£49,233	£49,847

3.10 Corn Square Income projections:

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<u>Income Corn Square</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Room Rentals	£0	£2,600	£3,000	£3,045	£3,091	£3,137
Office Lets	£0	£20,000	£23,000	£23,345	£23,695	£24,051
Car Parks	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£0	£22,600	£26,000	£26,390	£26,786	£27,188

3.11 Due to the sensitivity of the information the Tourist Information service is projected to cost the Town Council approximately £14,500 in 2016/17. Expenditure is projected at £42,000 with income around £27,500. Main costs are staff and stock purchase with income being generated from reduced stock sales, continued ticketing commission and some minor advertising spaces.

3.12 Open spaces maintenance costs have been reduced in places to try to achieve some economy. Some further savings may be achieved following year one of full management:

<u>Open Spaces</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Salaries	£0	£40,000	£41,200	£42,436	£43,709	£45,020
Uniforms	£0	£500	£515	£530	£546	£563
Vehicle Maintenance	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Vehicle Fuel	£0	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652	£2,732	£2,814
Street Cleaning	£10,900	£3,000	£3,090	£3,183	£3,278	£3,377
Waste	£0	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652	£2,732	£2,814
Open Spaces Maintenance	£0	£17,230	£17,919	£18,636	£19,381	£20,157
Maintenance	£11,000	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Equipment	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Telephones	£0	£600	£618	£637	£656	£675
Electricity	£0	£300	£309	£318	£328	£338
Gas	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Business Rates	£0	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Water Rates	£0	£150	£155	£159	£164	£169
Repairs & Renewals	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Priory Churchyard	£6,000	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Millenium Green	£2,600	£250	£258	£265	£273	£281
Play Areas	£0	£2,500	£2,575	£2,652	£2,732	£2,814
P3 Scheme	£1,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Lengthsman Scheme	£5,700	£6,000	£6,180	£6,365	£6,556	£6,753
Miscellaneous	£750	£750	£773	£796	£820	£844
Total	£37,950	£86,780	£89,556	£92,422	£95,381	£98,436

3.13 Open Spaces income is currently projected at zero although there will be some income and expenditure as a result of the Town Council being part of the P£ and Lengthsman scheme. However, this will be in the majority cost neutral apart from the £6,000 allocated. Every effort will be made to identify potential income sources:

<u>Open Spaces Income</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
P3 Scheme	£1,175	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Lengthsman Scheme	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£1,175	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0

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3.14 Markets & Events expenditure has been reduced slightly to try to achieve a greater surplus to enable other services to be delivered effectively:

<u>Markets/Events</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Salaries	£6,000	£10,000	£10,300	£10,609	£10,927	£11,255
Promotion	£0	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Advertising	£0	£750	£773	£796	£820	£844
Waste Disposal	£0	£2,000	£2,060	£2,122	£2,185	£2,251
Electricity	£0	£500	£515	£530	£546	£563
Subscriptions	£0	£400	£412	£424	£437	£450
Training	£0	£300	£309	£318	£328	£338
Equipment	£0	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,500	£1,500
Total	£6,000	£15,950	£16,429	£16,921	£17,836	£18,326

3.15 Market and Events Income has been projected to include a buoyant Friday Market, the continuation of the Farmers Market and the Plant Fairs and some additional specialist markets:

<u>Income Markets/Events</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Market Income	£18,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Miscellaneous	£0	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Total	£18,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000

3.16 Economic Development has been amended to include the 0.8% CCTV increase. Festive lights expenditure will be reduced and it is proposed that the newspapers for the library be discontinued.

<u>Economic Development</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Neighbourhood Plan	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Street Cleaning	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Leominster in Bloom	£0	£6,000	£6,000	£6,180	£6,365	£6,556
CCTV	£10,336	£10,439	£10,752	£11,075	£11,407	£11,749
Festive Lights	£16,000	£12,000	£12,360	£12,731	£13,113	£13,506
Library Newspapers	£820	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Market Towns Forum	£100	£100	£103	£106	£109	£113
Newsletter	£2,000	£1,200	£1,236	£1,273	£1,311	£1,351
Total	£29,256	£29,739	£30,451	£31,365	£32,306	£33,275

3.17 Public conveniences received a high level of support from the budget consultation. At its meeting on 11th January 2016 the Estates, Markets and Environment Committee recommended an annual expenditure of £55,000 per annum to maintain the three public conveniences in Central Car Park, Westbury Street and at the Grange subject to receiving the assets in a nil cost asset transfer.

3.18 The projected costs include borrowing £150,000 from the Public Works Loan Board over a 10 year period to upgrade the toilets. The scope of works will need to be formally agreed.

<u>Public Conveniences</u>	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Toilet Maintenance	£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Toilet Management	£20,000	£5,000	£6,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000

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Capital Investment						
Loan Repayment	£0	£16,385	£16,385	£16,385	£16,385	£16,385
Capital Fund	£0	£5,000	£4,000	£3,000	£1,000	£0
Central Area						
Business Rates	£0	£1,700	£1,751	£1,804	£1,858	£1,913
Water Rates	£0	£1,600	£1,648	£1,697	£1,748	£1,801
Electricity	£0	£700	£721	£743	£765	£788
Cleaning	£0	£3,215	£3,311	£3,411	£3,513	£3,619
The Grange						
Business Rates	£0	£1,500	£1,545	£1,591	£1,639	£1,688
Water Rates	£0	£1,400	£1,442	£1,485	£1,530	£1,576
Electricity	£0	£800	£824	£849	£874	£900
Cleaning	£0	£3,215	£3,311	£3,411	£3,513	£3,619
Westbury Street						
Business Rates	£0	£3,000	£3,090	£3,183	£3,278	£3,377
Water Rates	£0	£3,200	£3,296	£3,395	£3,497	£3,602
Electricity	£0	£1,600	£1,648	£1,697	£1,748	£1,801
Cleaning	£0	£6,000	£6,570	£6,767	£6,970	£7,179
Total	£28,000	£54,315	£55,543	£56,418	£55,319	£55,247

3.19 At present no income has been projected but Council aims to let space within the conveniences in the future to help reduce annual costs.

3.20 Allotment expenditure has been reduced following the significant investment made in them in 2015/16:

Allotments	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Ground Rent	£600	£960	£960	£960	£960	£960
Water Rates	£500	£500	£515	£530	£546	£563
General Maintenance	£1,700	£1,000	£1,030	£1,061	£1,093	£1,126
Grasscutting	£1,600	£1,640	£1,689	£1,740	£1,792	£1,846
Total	£4,400	£4,100	£4,194	£4,291	£4,391	£4,494

3.21 Income is projected to reflect the 2015/16 levels:

Allotment Income	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Allotment Rents	£4,600	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Total	£4,600	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000

3.22 The Capital Project fund has been developed to invest in plant, equipment and play areas:

Capital Projects	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Equipment	£11,500	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Play Areas	£5,000	£10,000	£10,000	£16,000	£16,000	£16,000
Total	£16,500	£20,000	£20,000	£26,000	£26,000	£26,000

3.23 The projected income and expenditure is outlined below:

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Total Expenditure	£393,825	£491,070	£497,660	£512,945	£522,064	£533,107
Total Income	£101,062	£98,293	£84,500	£85,740	£87,011	£88,314
Balance	£292,763	£392,777	£413,160	£427,205	£435,053	£444,793

3.24 Based on the current projections the Band D equivalent is outlined below:

Tax Base	3,476.54	3,525.99	3,578.88	3,632.56	3,687.05	3,742.36
Projected D band	£79.34	£111.39	£115.44	£117.60	£117.99	£118.85

3.25 The Tax Base has been confirmed by Herefordshire Council.

3.26 A precept of £392,777 will be required to meet the budgeted expenditure outlined above. This will result in a projected Band D of £111.39.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Council has set the budget in the knowledge that a range of devolved services will be taken over from Herefordshire Council. Public consultation indicates overall support for the Town Council to meet the cost of delivering these services.
- 4.2 There is no allowance to help subsidise public transport. If Council was minded to allocate a sum of £10,000 towards public transport this would result in a D Band increase of £114.23.
- 4.3 Council will continue to monitor its expenditure but will require a full year of trading to enable it to be more accurate in its future projections. Every effort will be made to increase income, reduce costs and maintain an affordable precept requirement in the future.