

## Budget-Setting at Marsham Parish Council

Residents will have seen their council tax demand for 2026-27, which includes the cost of running the parish. This year the parish precept has risen by 16%, or 16p a week for the average Band D property in Marsham. The parish council will cost the average Marsham resident £1.15 a week this coming year.

### Where Does the Precept Go?

The full Parish Council budget is published on the council website at: [Marsham Budget 2026-27](http://www.marsham-pc.gov.uk/finance) (www.marsham-pc.gov.uk/finance)

The Parish Council is responsible for managing and maintaining the grass and verges around the village, the playground and the streetlights. It is also required by law to employ a proper officer, which is the Clerk, have insurance in place and maintain a reserve fund that equates to between 3 and 12 months expenditure.

### Streetlights

The streetlights have been costing over £400 a month in electricity. In 2022 the Council opted for conversion to LED and around half the streetlights were converted. Turning that project into reduced electricity bills has now been completed and this will feed through to reduced costs to the village. The Council has decided to go ahead with the final phase of the LED conversion. Electricity bills for the streetlights are likely to reduce by around 67% on the 2024 cost. Even if the price of electricity goes up significantly, Marsham will be impacted far less than would have been the case before the LED project. Obviously, this is also good news for the carbon footprint of the village.

### Grass Cutting

The grass cutting contract for the village has historically accounted for about half of the precept. The Council receives a payment from the County Council to keep highways verges cut and will continue to maintain those as required. The village grass will also be cut regularly, but residents may notice a reduced frequency especially in dry weather. It is always difficult to predict the amount of grass cutting that will be needed as the weather can be so changeable. Please let the Clerk know of any concerns during the year.

Other grass areas, for which the council is not responsible, will be excluded from our grass cutting contract this year.

### Play Area

The play area requires additional maintenance and some repairs. Grants will be sought, but it is hoped that the reduction in electricity and grass-cutting bills will enable the Council to keep the play area in good repair. Any residents who may be able to help us to maintain this

wonderful facility for the children of the village or who can help with fund raising efforts to improve the area, please contact the Clerk.

This year there have been changes to the way local councils must operate.

The Parish Council has therefore updated many policies, procedures and its email address for greater accessibility and security.

The reserves the Council will hold at the end of the financial year 2027 are predicted to be around 60% of the total forecast expenditure - the minimum the Council feels is prudent.

## The Work of the Council

Decisions to increase council tax are never taken lightly. Your Parish Councillors - all of whom are volunteers - work hard to balance the need to maintain essential services, invest responsibly in the Parish's assets, and provide best value for Marsham.

Parish Council meetings are held on the second Monday every month at 7pm in the Church. All are welcome to attend.

If you have any questions about the budget, please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Clerk.

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