

12 December 2017

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee will be held at the Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane, Hednesford at **10:30 am on Tuesday 19 December 2017**. You are invited to attend for consideration of the matters shown on the agenda.

Yours sincerely



Peter Harrison
Town Council Manager/Clerk

To: All Members of the Council

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Meeting held on 20 December 2016 (Enclosed – pages 1 to 3)
4. Report of the Town Council Manager/Clerk

a. Estimates of Income and Expenditure – 2018-19

To consider estimates of income and expenditure, review provisions accounts and investment arrangements for 2018-19 and make recommendations thereon to the Full Council on 2 January 2018 (Enclosed Agenda pages 1 to 2)

Estimated expenditure has taken into account likely increases due to inflation etc. In addition members will recall that the Town Council agreed to fund the cost of Road Closure Orders in connection with regular monthly markets (April to September and Christmas). In addition Hednesford in Partnership is requesting that the Council arrange and fund the cost of necessary street trading licences for the markets to be able to operate legally

Peter Harrison JP BA (Hons) Town Council Manager/Clerk
Pye Green Community Centre Bradbury Lane Hednesford WS12 4EP
Email: peter.harrison@hednesford-tc.gov.uk
Web: www.hednesford-tc.gov.uk
Tel: 01543 424872

It is estimated that the cost of the Road Closure Orders will be £2400 and the licences an additional £200. This does not take into account the time of Town Council staff

Members need to know that if the licence application is in the name of the Town Council it will be responsible for ensuring that market traders are operating legally e.g. not selling counterfeit or illegal goods, confirming that alcohol sales are covered by separate licences and take away food traders have relevant permissions

Members will need to consider whether support should continue to be given to CAB in respect of the Outreach Service at Pye Green Community Centre

With regard to the level of Precept, information is attached from the Head of Finance at Cannock Chase Council

There is also a schedule giving examples of increasing the budget per elector and for Band D properties per annum

Members will note that £2200.59 income has been received in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Under the current rules the sums received must be spent within 5 years of receipt and must be in respect of:

(a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or

(b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that the development places on an area.

Section 137 Expenditure

The amount of any expenditure under section 137(4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for 2017-2018 was **£7.57** per elector and is likely to remain at a similar amount for 2018-19

Section 137 permits councils in England which do not have the general power of competence to incur expenditure for purposes for which they do not have a specific power. The expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit to the community (It cannot be used to spend money on an individual).

Publicity

Where the Council Precept is more than £140,000 there is a requirement for Town and Parish Council's to formally publicise and notify council taxpayers about the budget

b. Notification of external auditor appointments for the 2017-18 financial year

The following notification has been received from the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Limited:

“Under powers set out in Regulation 3 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) was appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as "a person specified to appoint local auditors" and as the Sector Led Body (SLB) for smaller authorities. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million.

Under the Regulations, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.

During 2016 various communications outlined that smaller authorities would be 'opted-in' to the new central procurement regime managed by SAAA unless they expressly decided to 'opt-out' and correctly followed the various procedures required under statute to appoint their own external auditors.

Your authority is opted-in to the central procurement process and therefore an external auditor has been appointed for your authority for the 5 year period commencing with the financial year 2017/18. The contact details of your appointed external auditor and fee scales are shown in the appendix, and can also be found on our website.

The approach applied to making these appointments was described last year on the SAAA website at <http://www.localaudits.co.uk/appts.html>. The approach follows the established practice of grouping auditor appointments for Town and Parish Councils by county area. Drainage Authorities and other bodies all have the same audit firm appointed. The audit firms all have previous experience of conducting limited assurance reviews for smaller bodies and have dedicated personnel to support communications. SAAA will monitor the performance of the appointed firms in providing limited assurance audit services in terms of quality and compliance with their statutory terms of appointment.

If your authority has any potential conflict of interest relating to the auditor appointment, for instance if a Councillor, or close relation is employed by the appointed auditor, you should advise SAAA immediately.

Exempt authorities

There are various changes to the legislation taking effect from 2017/18, most notably the potential for authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the year was £25,000 or less, to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor if they meet certain qualifying criteria.

However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', will still need to fully complete and publish an annual return and must still have a named appointed auditor to deal with questions or objections from local electors about the accounts. Opted in authorities have already had an auditor appointed for them by SAAA.

The Annual Return

The Annual Return will now be known as the "Annual Governance and Accountability Return" and will need to be completed in accordance "proper practices" as set out in '*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners' Guide*', and then be published in accordance with the applicable Transparency Codes.

The new, Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms will be sent out by your appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year. It is assumed that your authority is willing and able to accept documents electronically by e-mail unless you specifically advise SAAA to the contrary no later than 31 December 2017. The return can either be completed electronically or printed off and completed manually.

Advice and assistance is available from the various sector membership organisations, namely:

National Association of Local Councils and County Associations - www.nalc.gov.uk

Society of Local Council Clerks - www.slcc.co.uk

Association of Drainage Authorities - www.ada.org.uk

Appendix

Auditor appointments for smaller authorities for the five financial years from 2017/18 to 2021/22

On 30 November 2016 SAAA announced the conclusion of its procurement process and the award of limited assurance review contracts for five years to the successful external audit firms. Responsibilities under the new contracts will relate to accounts for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2017. Further details of the specific appointments by County area for opted-in authorities are detailed below.

Audit appointments by area for 2017-2022

MAZARS LLP		
Bedfordshire	Cleveland and Co. Durham	Staffordshire

Contact details are shown below.

APPOINTED AUDITORS CONTACT DETAILS

Mazars LLP
Salvus House,
Aykley Heads,
Durham DH1 5TS

local.councils@mazars.co.uk

0191 383 6348

Scales of Fees 2017-18 to 2021-22

The following fees have been determined by SAAA following consultation for the Audit Years 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Scales of audit fees

Scales of fees for smaller authorities are based on bands of annual income or expenditure, whichever is the higher. This means that the fees are broadly proportionate to the public funds involved and the ability of each authority to pay.

Table 1 sets out the scales of audit fees for smaller authorities that complete their Annual Returns fully and accurately within the required timescales, and provide the necessary supporting information and any explanations sought.

Authorities with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £200,000 will be subject to basic limited assurance audit review. Authorities with either income or expenditure exceeding £200,000 will be subject to intermediate limited assurance audit review.

Table1 - Scale of fees for bodies subject to limited assurance review

INCOME/EXPENDITURE BAND (£)	FEE FOR LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW (£)
0 - 25,000	0 (see note)
25,001 - 50,000	200
50,001 - 100,000	300
100,001 - 200,000	400
200,001 - 300,000	600
300,001 - 400,000	800
400,001 - 500,000	1,000
500,001 - 750,000	1,300
750,001 - 1,000,000	1,600
1,000,001 - 2,000,000	2,000

2,000,001 - 3,000,000	2,400
3,000,001 - 4,000,000	2,800
4,000,001 - 5,000,000	3,200
5,000,001 - 6,500,000	3,600

Note: An authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000 that is **not** able to certify that it is an exempt authority as it does not meet the qualifying criteria, or if the authority wishes to have a limited assurance review by the external auditor, then the fee payable will be £200.

Reminder letters

Where a supplier is required to send a reminder to any authority, the supplier will charge the authority £40 for each reminder.

Additional work and variations to the scale fees

If an active authority fails either to submit its Annual Return to the supplier for review by 30 September or (if it is an exempt authority) to provide a certificate of exemption, the supplier will consider issuing a public interest report, the cost of which will be payable by the authority pertaining to the fee income band of that authority as in Table 1 (above).

Extra fees may also be charged, subject to SAAA's approval, in other circumstances, for example where auditors have to:

- consider objections to the accounts from local electors, from the point at which the auditor accepts the objection as valid;
- exercise special powers in relation to the review, such as issuing a report in the public interest; or
- undertake any special investigations, such as those arising from disclosures under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Extra fees will be calculated and charged according to the work required, subject to the maximum hourly rates set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Maximum hourly rates for additional work at smaller authorities

STAFF GRADE	MAXIMUM £ PER HOUR
Engagement lead	355
Senior manager/manager	215
Senior auditor	140
Other staff	105

Value Added Tax

The fee scales exclude Value Added Tax, which will be charged at the prevailing rate on all work undertaken.

c. Applications for Financial Assistance

For the year 2017-18 the Town Council agreed to include in its budget the sum of £10,200 for grants/donations

Up to date £5000 has been awarded to CAB. This leaves a budget of £5,200

The Town Council is requested to consider the following requests that have been received and to give priority to approving those required to cover rental charges for hire of the Pye Green Community Centre

Name	Amount Requested	Report Page Numbers	Amount Granted 2017	Note
Brindley Village Legacy Group	£1000	1 to 12	£0	
Chadsmoor Tapestry Group	£694.63	13 to 14	£0	3
Chase Parkinson's Group	£300	15 to 17	£300	
Greenheath FC	£500	18 to 19	£300	
Heart of Hednesford	£500	20 to 28	£300	4
Hednesford in Partnership	£1650	29 to 35	£500	
Hednesford Probus Computer Club	£352	36 to 39	£0	2
Hednesford Town FC Supporters Association	£500	40 to 44	£200	
Katherine House Hospice	n/s	45 to 47	£300	
Ladies Social	£700	48 to 50	£0	2
Museum of Cannock Chase	£500	51 to 53	£0	1
St. Peter's Church	£15,000	54 to 66	£0	

Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnerships Community Speedwatch – North Hednesford (Cllr G Adamson)	£354.48	67	£0	
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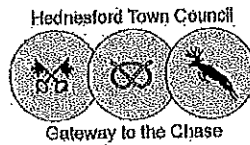
Notes:

1. This application was accompanied by a large number of supporting documents which may be viewed by contacting the Town Council Manager/Clerk
2. The sum requested is to cover the cost of room hire at Pye Green Community Centre
3. The sum requested is to cover the cost of materials used to produce the Hednesford Tapestry
4. Part of the sum requested is to fund the cost of materials and equipment to maintain the Miners' Memorial (members will recall that in the past the Town Council agreed to fund this work)

In determining the award of any financial assistance the guiding principle is that in the opinion of the Council it is in the interests of or will directly benefit the area or its inhabitants, or part of it, or some of them

d. **Town Centre Christmas Event**

In previous years the Town Council has made financial contributions to organisations involved in organising or participating in the Town Centre Christmas event. Members are asked to consider if they wish this practice to continue and if so determine what action to take



Finance & General Purposes Committee

Pye Green Community Centre, Bradbury Lane, Hednesford

10:30 am Tuesday 20 December 2016

Present: Cllrs D J Davis (Chairman), G Adamson, S Cartwright, B Gamble, D Grice and A Pearson

In attendance P Harrison (Town Council Manager/Clerk) and L Bowman (Assistant Clerk)

(Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C Mitchell and L Whitehouse)

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 December 2015 were approved

2. Report of the Town Council Manager/Clerk

a. Estimates of Income and Expenditure – 2017-18

Consideration was given to estimates of income and expenditure for 2017-18. Members were provided with information from Cannock Chase Council relating to the calculation of the Council Tax base and considered the implications of decisions made by Cannock Chase Council regarding withdrawal of Council Tax Grant and the cessation of funding for Christmas Lighting.

RECOMMENDED:

- i) That the estimates of income and expenditure as set out in Annex 1 be approved and a precept in the sum of £137,500 be demanded from Cannock Chase Council for 2017-18
- ii) That support of £5000 per annum be provided to CAB for the continued provision of the Outreach Service at Pye Green
- iii) In the light of ii) above the request from Staffordshire County Council for the Town Council to contribute to its budget for CAB services be rejected
- iv) That the action taken by the Town Council Manager/Clerk with regard to investment of reserves be confirmed as follows:

Nationwide	£50,000 (for 6 months)
Lloyds Bank	£50,000 (for 12 months)

b. Applications for Financial Assistance

Consideration was given to requests for Financial Assistance. Members agreed to consider a late application from Florence Street Scallywags

RECOMMENDED

That the following grants be awarded:

i)	AFC Greenheath ¹	£300
ii)	1 st Hednesford Scout Group	£300
iii)	Heart of Hednesford ²	£300
iv)	Hednesford Centennial Lions	£500
v)	Hednesford in Partnership ³	£500
vi)	Hednesford Town FC Supporters Association ⁴	£200
vii)	Katharine House Hospice	£300
viii)	Ryu Shotokan Karate ⁵	£200
ix)	Staffordshire Regimental Association Hednesford ⁶	£250
x)	St John Ambulance	£200
xi)	Florence Street Scallwags	£850

Members declared interests in relation to the following applications

¹ Cllrs A Pearson and S Cartwright

² Cllr G Adamson

³ Cllrs G Adamson and B Gamble

⁴ Cllrs B Gamble and A Pearson

⁵ Cllr S Cartwright

⁶ Cllr A Pearson

c. Town Centre Christmas Event

Members discussed the recent town centre Christmas event which all agreed had been very successful. Consideration was given to recognising the contribution of various parties who had assisted with the organisation or who had participated in the event

RECOMMENDED:

- i) That the Town Council confirm its commitment to contributing to future Christmas events on the basis that the event shall not be used for the promotion of any political party as this would be ultra vires and that those involved with the organisation be advised accordingly
- ii) That in recognition of, assistance given, entertainment or other services provided in connection with the Christmas event the following payments be made

Pye Green Academy	£100
Hednesford Valley High	£100

Staffordshire University Academy ¹	£100
Stars Academy	£100
West Hill Primary School	£100
Kingsmead School	£100
St Peter's School	£100
Burntwood Rotary	£100
Hednesford Centennial Lions	£100
Hednesford in Partnership	£250

¹ Cllr G Adamson declared an interest as Governor

The meeting ended at 11:35 am

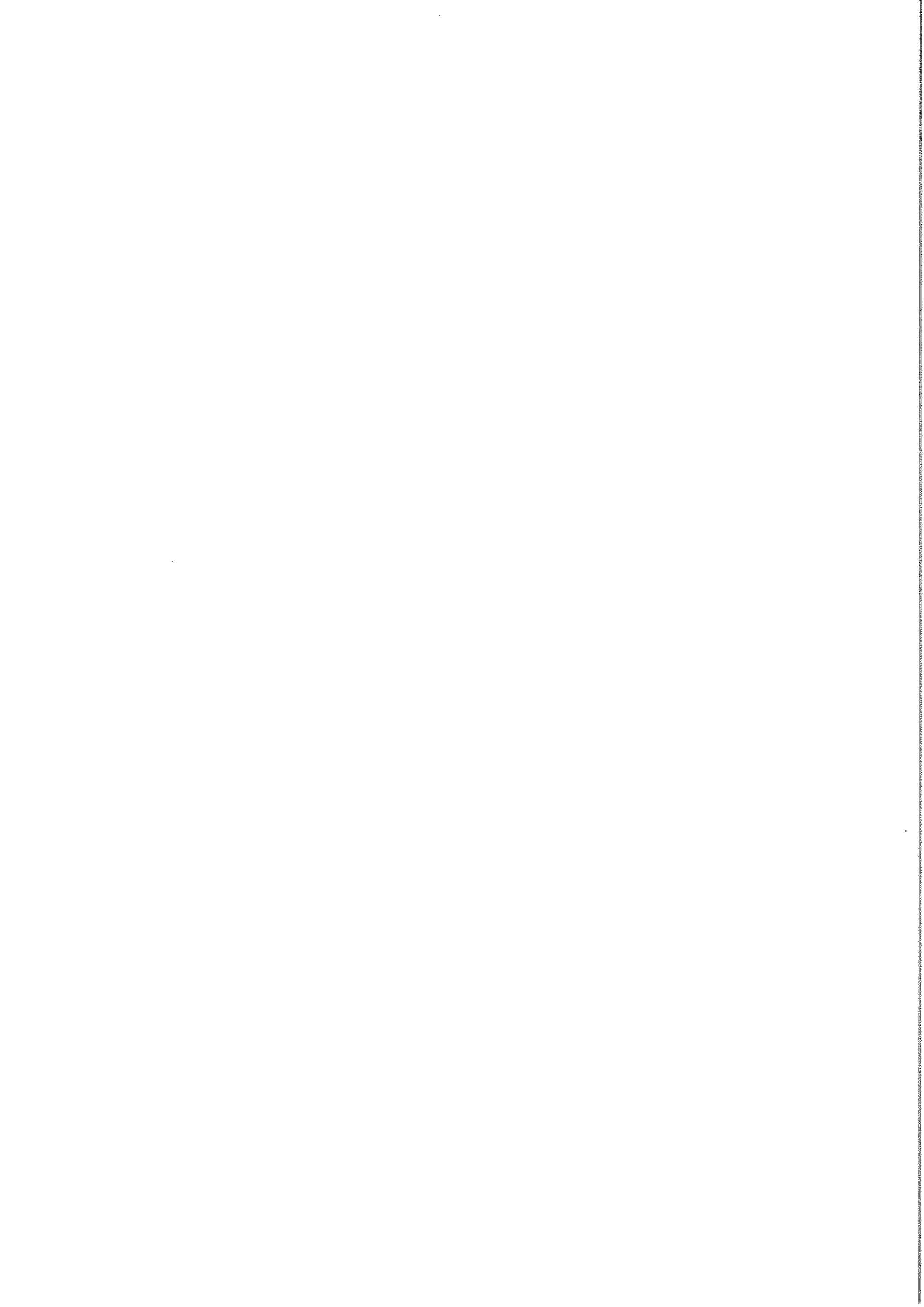
Signed:

Dated:



**HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET 2018/19**

	Budget 2017/18	Actual to 30.11.17	Expect to Spend	Budget 2018/19
Expenditure				
Clerks Department				
Salaries	49,000	30,050	49,000	50,000
Travelling	100	38	60	100
	49,100	30,088	49,060	50,100
Council Running Costs				
Telephone/Broadband	1,000	544	1,000	1,000
Stationery Items	250	118	250	250
Postage	700	410	700	700
Photocopying	750	347	750	750
Computer software & Maintenance	100	207	207	100
Furniture & Equipment	200	0	0	200
Subscriptions	1400	1,241	1,400	1400
Insurance	1500	0	1,500	1500
Audit Fees	400	600	600	400
Professional Fees	400	220	400	400
Councillor Training	150	0	0	150
Clerk Training	50	0	0	50
Conference Fees	100	0	0	100
Chairmans Allowance	1,000	310	1,000	1,000
Bank Charges	300	101	180	200
	8,300	4,098	7,987	8,200
Pye Green Community Centre				
PGCH - Electric	5,000	3,469	5,000	5,000
PGCH - Annual Utilities Checks, Fire Exting Srv	600	1,058	1,058	600
PGCH - Water Rates	1,500	620	1,500	1,500
PGCH - Insurance	1,200	0	1,200	1,200
PGCH - Salaries & Payroll costs	22,200	15,115	22,700	24,000
PGCH - Rates	7,500	4,505	6,757	7,500
PGCH - Licencing	180	180	180	180
PGCH - Rubbish Collection	1,000	659	1,000	1,000
PGCH- Sanitary Disposal	350	0	350	350
PGCH - Minor Repairs, Uniform, Gardening, Equi	1,200	85	500	1,200
PGCH - Cleaning Materials	800	618	800	800
PGCH - Security	700	683	683	700
PGCH- Furniture & Equipment	200	450	450	200
PGCH - Building Maintenance & Upgrades	3,000	0	0	3,000
PGCH - Advertising & Marketing Cost	150	99	99	150
PGCH - Loan Repayment	17,432	8,716	17,432	17,432
	63,012	36,257	59,709	64,812
Activities				
S.31 CCTV - Running Expenses	23,000	23,382	23,382	24,000
Publicity & Promotion	4,100	2,791	4,123	4,100
S137 Donations, grants, misc	5,200	0	5,200	5,200
Citizen Advise Bureau	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Hednesford Street Christmas Lights	5,000	960	5,000	5,000
S.144 Events & Christmas	6,000	2,299	4,000	7,000
Heritage	1,000	0	0	500
Election costs	0	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Plan	2,000	500		500
Misc	1,000	401	1,000	1,000
	52,300	35,333	47,705	52,300
Total Expenditure	172,712	105,776	164,461	175,412



HEDNESFORD TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET 2018/19

	Budget 2017-18	Actual to date	Expected Income	Budget 2018-19
		£	£	£
Income				
Precept	137,500.00	137,500.00	137,500.00	137,500.00
Interest Received	700.00	0.14	700.00	700.00
Miscellaneous Income	100.00			100.00
General Income	138,300.00	137,500.14	138,200.00	138,300.00
PGCC - Lettings	28,000.00	21,630.96	32,000.00	30,000.00
PGCC - Bar Takings	500.00	693.22	850.00	500.00
Community Hall Income	28,500.00	22,324.18	32,850.00	30,500.00
Total Income	166,800.00	159,824.32	171,050.00	168,800.00
Less Total Expenditure	172,712.00	105,776.00	164,461.00	175,412.00
Surplus/-Deficit	-5,912.00	54,048.32	6,589.00	-6,612.00

Y/E Reserve analysis 2018/19

Council Computer Replacement Programme	2,000.00
Election Costs	9,000.00
Building Repairs & Renewals	87,036.17
General reserve	5,870.72
Community Support Fund	30,000.00
CIL Income - Town Centre Maintenance	2,200.59
	<u>136,107.48</u>





Hednesford Town Council
P Harrison [Town Council Clerk]
Pye Green Community Centre
Hednesford
WS12 4EP

Bob Kean
Civic Offices
3rd Floor
Cannock
Staffordshire
WS11 1BG

Date: 20 November 2017

Dear Town Clerk

Council Tax Base 2018-19

I have undertaken an initial calculation of your Tax Base and will be recommending it is set at 5,145.42 Band D equivalents (as compared to 4,837.63 in 2017-18)

If the parish sets a similar precept to 2017-18 a 6.0% percentage decrease in the Band D will occur.

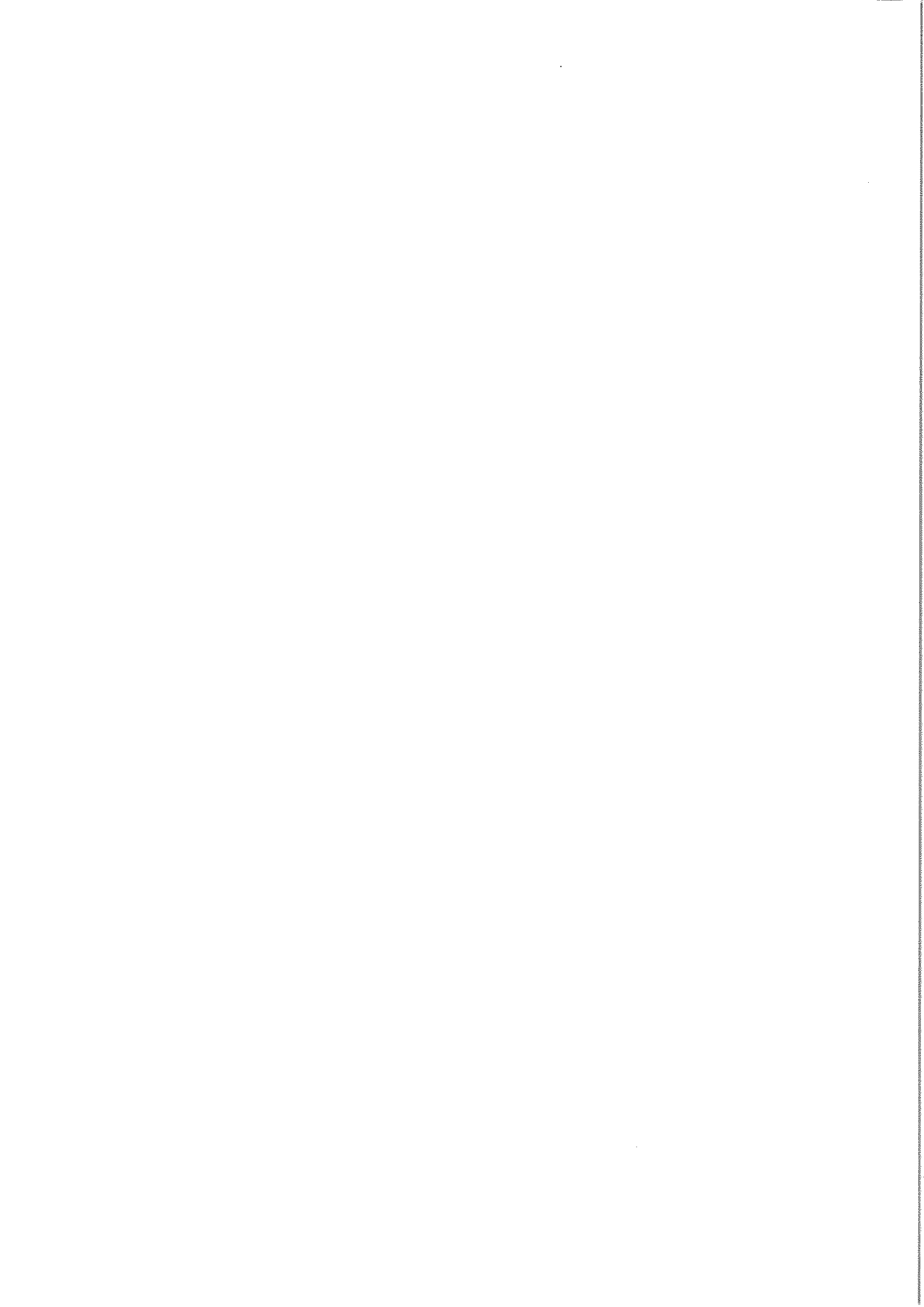
I look forward to receiving your precept confirmation by email (jamesbellingham@cannockchasedc.gov.uk) or in writing as soon as practicable after the relevant parish meeting.

If you know the date of the precept meeting please could you let me know the date?

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Bob Kean
Deputy Managing Director



Hednesford Parish Council Tax Charge

	2018/2019 Parish Precept	2018/2019 Parish Precept	2017/2018 Parish Precept
	EXAMPLE USING 2017- 18 PRECEPT	PROPOSED TAXBASE	ACTUAL
	£	£	£
Precept - amount to be paid to Parish	137,500.00	137,500.00	137,500.00
Amount to be charged to taxpayers	137,500.00	137,500.00	137,500.00
Divided by the Tax Base	5,145.42	5,145.42	4,837.63
Amount per Band D Property	26.72	26.72	28.42
Percentage change to last year: Increase / (Decrease)	-6.0%	-6.0%	

