



Edenbridge Town Council statement on Budget and Precept for 2024-25

The Council's budget and Precept for 2024-25 were confirmed at the January meeting (15 January). This followed the December meeting when Council considered the draft budget proposals and Precept recommendations.

Key points and aims in setting the draft budget:

- Maintain the high standard of services that Edenbridge residents enjoy.
- Minimise impact to residents of any increase in tax cost.
- To ensure the financial stability of the Council's General Reserves, which has taken four years to recover from, following several years which had drawdown from the reserves to support Council expenditure, leaving the reserves at a weaker position which were in the region of £250k (at one time considerably below this).

In considering the expenditure and income, Council must also consider its reserves position.

Summary

Expenditure: £858,575
Income (estimated): £113,390 plus the Precept
Council Precept: £745,185
Band D equivalent £188.32 (subject to the 2024-25 tax base figure confirmation)

The tax base is defined as the number of Band D equivalent properties in a local authority's area. The tax base for Edenbridge 2024-25 is 3957.01 (1.67% increase on last year's figure). This would take a Band D tax level to £188.32, a £7.89 per year increase, or £0.66p per month.

For further information and background, in considering the draft budget and Precept, refer to the [draft budget and precept statement published on the website](#).

Budget 2024-25 comparison update

We know utilities will increase, and the 10-and-30-year maintenance plans vary each year depending on planned works. These plans were reviewed last year, and Council has agreed for Doggetts Barn, Church House, Rickards Hall, and the Pavilion to all have new 10-year plans. These will be available for next year's planning (2025-26).

Personnel: Salaries overall budget (includes wages, National Insurance, pension, medical, P11) and along an estimated pay award at 4%, £469,607 (8.6% on 2023-24).

Open Spaces: Running costs for the open spaces and vehicles are similar to current year, with increases for streetlight energy increases (currently, ave. £1,600 pcm); streetlight column

replacement programme has one of its larger amounts in the 30-year plan £45k; and a small increase has been included for other utilities. Budget request £436,084. (14.9% on 2023-24.)

Other expenditure previously supported for the new budget includes:

- Providing for professional services to help make recommendation for draft Local Plan
- Annual community event budget
- Buildings surveys for Church House and Doggetts Barn
- Insurance - increase premium is a result of index linking of the current sums insured currently 10% for Buildings and 8% for Contents but could change for renewal July 2024
- Legal fees we have budgeted £5k, but as can be seen this year can be higher with unauthorised access issues, new lease for Forge Singers. The Lease review for the Museum is due March 2025, and of course unauthorised encampments are unknown.
- Rickards Hall requires some external and internal repairs. EMR has £9k, but we know that the likely costs will be more
- Elections, for 2024-25 this has been put to '£0'. Whilst there is always a risk of the by-election, £5k unspent in current budget can be moved to EMR. As the May election was uncontested (this would have cost est, £15-16k), this puts EMR Elections to £20,500; it is recommended Council maintains funds to cover elections.

[View the full copy of the income and expenditure budget for 2024-25](#)