



PRESS RELEASE

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NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL CONFIRMS BUDGET FOR 2009/10

At the Town Hall last night Newbury Town Councillors set the precept for the ratepayers of Newbury for the coming financial year.

Leader of the Council Ian Grose said “This year’s budget decision has been especially hard, particularly in the light of the global economic downturn that is affecting all of Newbury’s residents. The Council has set a prudent and forward-looking budget which will maintain our high-quality services at a sustainable and value-for-money cost to local residents.”

“The level of funding for the town’s open spaces has been maintained, ensuring that they will continue to be enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages. We have maintained our commitment to quality of life and public safety through continued funding of neighbourhood warden schemes, and there is provision for the first part of a long-term programme to fully reopen Newtown Road Cemetery to all.”

Deputy Leader Ifor Sheldon said “We are delighted to maintain the level of grant support for voluntary clubs and societies. This budget also shows that we are actively seeking to make sure that Newbury’s residents pay a fair price for some services bought in from outside bodies, such as public toilet provision and the cleaning contract for the Market Place.”

...continued

The Council's costs continue to be managed well despite large increases in external costs, and this is illustrated well by the costs of staging the Tour of Britain Stage 2 finish in Newbury last September being met without adding a single penny to the precept. The Council's finances remain in excellent shape, and this balanced budget leaves the Council's reserves at a prudent level. It takes proper account of the risk of damage to Council facilities such as playgrounds and open spaces, and for looking after the Council's properties, and makes no risky assumptions of falling energy costs or rate of return on the Council's investments."

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook added "Once again, Newbury Town Council has adopted a prudent, affordable and sustainable budget, which will enable it to continue to deliver a value for money Council that is second to none in this area".

END

Cllr Ian Grose – Leader of the Council (grose.ian9@btinternet.com 01635 36816)

Note to editors: The actual increase in precept (the amount collected by West Berkshire Council for use by Newbury Town Council) is £1.48p per annum (to £68.80p) for the average Band D household (a percentage rise of 2.2% and slightly less than 3p / week)