

FINANCE COMMITTEE

**The Finance Committee of
Haverhill Town Council will hold a meeting on
Tuesday 21st October 2003 at 7.00 pm,
at The Studio, Town Hall Arts Centre,
High Street, Haverhill**



HAVERHILL TOWN COUNCIL

Bevan House, Camps Road
Haverhill
Suffolk CB9 8HF

Telephone: 01440 712858
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CONSTITUTION: Chair:
Town Councillors:

**J Rudd
Sue Fanning, Gerry Kiernan,
Maggie Lee, Mary Martin, and
Nick Whelan**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

Please give any apologies to the office before the meeting.

2. To confirm the new Mayor as Chair of the Committee

To confirm the new Town Mayor as Chair of the Finance Committee.

3. Declaration of Interest

For Members to declare interests in matters on the agenda.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of Meeting held 17th June 2003.

5. Matters arising

To deal with urgent matters arising from those minutes.

6. Correspondence

7. Resolutions Moved by Councillors

a. Cllr Fanning – “That in view of the time between Committee and Council meetings each Committee be authorised to delegate urgent

- action that requires a decision before the next scheduled meeting to the Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and the Town Clerk, any such decision being made by the majority of any two of these three.”
- b. Cllr Dane – “That the Haverhill Town Council pledges to make no rises in the Haverhill Town Council precept for 2004 / 2005 and to maintain such a precept at the level of the current financial year.”
 - c. Cllr Dane – “That the Haverhill Town Council restores all committee positions, chairs and vice chairs to that which existed prior to the Haverhill Town Council Meeting dated 15 July 2003.”
 - d. Cllr Dane – “That mobile phones are switched off during meetings of the Haverhill Town Council.”
 - e. Cllr Dane – “That Standing Orders of the Haverhill Town Council be changed so that Full Town Council Meetings are held once every month and the Community First Committee is terminated.”
 - f. Cllr Dane – “That the Standing Orders of the Haverhill Town Council be changed so that Standing Order 49 be deleted from the Standing Orders for the Haverhill Town Council that reads "Members appointed to Committees may nominate substitutes if unable to attend a meeting of that Committee."”
 - g. Cllr Dane – “That an addition is made to Standing Order 41 of the Standing Orders for the Haverhill Town Council as f) to read "all members not affiliated to political parties or groupings shall be grouped together as if they were a group and allocated seats on the basis as if they were a group and that in the event of a dispute over committee membership by such a group the Chairman of the Council shall have the final decision."”

7. Checks on Payments by Councillors

For Councillors to introduce regular random checks on payments made as part of a regular audit routine

8. Councillors Allowances (Referred from Full Council)

To note the current situation

9. Quality Town Council

To determine whether Haverhill Town Council wishes to pursue the achievement of Quality Town Council status (see attached)

10. Committee Budget 2004/2005

To review this Committee’s budget for 2004/2005 (see attached)

11. Town Council Budget 2004/2005

To review the Town Council's overall budget for 2004/2005 (see attached), and make recommendations to the Full Council

12. Closure

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Mott". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Town Clerk

15 October 2003

Quality Town Council Status

The Quality Town Council status should be seen as a “chartermark” of good practice, which will become recognised as a future pre-requisite when seeking future investment or service devolution.

Extracts from the Quality Town Council scheme documentation is attached, and Members will recognise that the Town Council needs to implement certain changes before applying for the award of the status.

There will be some costs attached to these changes, which will need to be taken into account when formulating next year’s budget. These relate mainly to the need to publicise the Town Council’s activities more widely and frequently than may previously have been the case. For a town the size of Haverhill the most cost efficient distribution mechanism will be to utilise the existing newspapers, and therefore the costs of preparing (say) a full page of copy each quarter, together with advertising costs, needs to be accounted for. This can be estimated at £3,500 per annum.

What is a Quality Parish Council?

2.1 A Quality Parish Council:

- is representative of, and actively engages, all parts of its community, providing vision, identity and a sense of belonging;
- is effectively and properly managed;
- articulates the needs and wishes of its community;
- upholds high standards of conduct;
- is committed to work in partnership with principal local authorities and other public service agencies;
- in proportion to its size and skills, delivers local services on behalf of principal local authorities when this represents the best deal for the local community;
- works closely with voluntary groups in its community;
- provides leadership to the community through its work on parish plans; and
- working with its partners, acts as an information point for local services.

2.2 A Quality Parish Council will provide leadership in promoting an inclusive community through, for example, supporting community transport schemes and childcare provision and helping to develop youth activities and services for the elderly.

2.3 A Quality Parish Council will work with others, including the voluntary and community sector, to undertake services funded from its own resources to look after the parish environment and provide public facilities such as playgrounds. Quality Parish Councils, with the agreement of their principal local authorities, may take on the delivery of some services on their behalf, where this gives the local community the best deal.

2.6 Clearly, Quality Parish Councils will be in a better position than other parish councils to help realise the ambitions and goals contained within their parish and town plans. They will be in a better position to represent the views of local people and to ensure that principal local authorities and other service providers listen to and respond to the needs of local people. They may also be in a better position to take action and decisions more directly, including the delivery of some local services.

2.7 Finally, through being wired up through Information and Communications Technology (ICT), we would expect that many Quality Parish Councils will become the local access point for information about parish council and principal local authority services and further advice on these services.

The Benefits of the Quality Parish Council Scheme

3.1 The Quality Parish Council Scheme offers a number of benefits, primarily to the community that the parish council represents, but also to the parish council itself and principal local authorities in the area.

3.2 In Chapter 2 we set out the Government's vision of a Quality Parish Council. By meeting this vision and gaining Quality status, the parish council will be able to bring considerable benefits to the community it represents.

3.2 Parish councils already have a wide range of powers. A Quality Parish Council, in proportion to their size and skills, will be able to do more on behalf of their principal local authorities, thereby making services more responsive to local needs.

3.3 Quality Parish Councils will play an enhanced role in the community as an integral part of all consultation and co-ordination arrangements set up by principal local authorities and other service providers on how services are delivered in its area; in the discussion, management and delivery of services which parish councils may carry out and deliver, on behalf of the principal local authority, or by using their own existing powers; and in the provision of access points to information on services of principal local authorities and other service providers.

- 3.5 This enhanced role will be achieved through the negotiation of charters with principal local authorities. Principal local authorities are encouraged to enter into such agreements with all parish councils and to consider negotiating additional roles and responsibilities for Quality Parish Councils. Indeed, the benefits envisaged for the community will not materialise without the support of the relevant principal local authorities for the area and a willingness to work with the parish council to provide the best deal for the local community.
- 3.6 The main beneficiary of Quality status will be the local community. However, we hope that parish councils themselves will benefit from the enhanced role that Quality status provides.
- 3.7 Since 1997, the Government has introduced a number of changes which have been designed to make all tiers of local authority more responsive and more accountable to local people and to ensure that the local community sees their council as relevant to their needs and aspirations and a force for good.
- 3.8 By meeting the requirements of this scheme and receiving Quality status, a parish council is sending out a message that it is a truly competent and worthy representative of its community.
- 3.9 It should mean additional roles and responsibilities for parish councils with proof to the local community that the parish council can make a difference. It will provide an assurance that principal local authorities will consult and involve the parish council in all matters that affect the local community. And with the increased responsibilities should come the money from principal local authorities to fund the parish council for new roles delegated to it.
- 3.10 Parish councils are, quite rightly, increasingly consulted by Government and its agencies on matters that relate to the activities of public bodies. The Government recognises that parish councils are subject to an increasing amount of paperwork, and that Quality status may increase that amount. However, one of the benefits of being wired up through ICT (which Quality Parish Councils increasingly will be) is that it will allow easy access to the Information for Local Government web site at www.info4local.gov.uk.
- 3.11 This site provides the first one-stop shop for local authorities to access information they need on the web sites of central government departments, agencies and public bodies.
- 3.12 While the Quality Parish Council Scheme is intended to bring material benefits to the community at large, the scheme also benefits principal local authorities.
- 3.13 Some principal local authorities have already recognised the benefits of working with parish councils and are proactive in working together to deliver local services, but others have concerns about entering into such partnerships. The Government recognises that a principal local authority will want to know that the parish council is able to deliver before entering into agreements for partnership working.
- 3.14 This is the benefit of the scheme for principal local authorities. It provides an independent assessment of the parish council and those with Quality status can be seen to be representative, competent, well managed, and able to take on an enhanced role. Further reassurance is provided through the requirement that each Quality Parish Council will undergo this assessment every 4 years.
- 3.15 Principal local authorities can therefore be confident that the Quality Parish Councils within their areas are worthy partners, which in turn should instil faith in these councils' capacity to undertake an enhanced role for the benefit of their communities.

The Quality Criteria

- 4.1 For a parish council to attain Quality status, it should be able to demonstrate that it: is representative of, and actively engages with, all parts of its community, providing vision, identity and a sense of belonging; is effectively and properly managed; and has the ability and capacity to take on the enhanced role and responsibility that Quality status is likely to bring.
- 4.2 Tests have been devised to measure these criteria. A parish council must pass each Test to be awarded Quality status. This chapter explains the requirements and how you should present your evidence. The Tests cover the following:
1. Electoral Mandate
 2. Qualifications of the Clerk
 3. Council Meetings
 4. Communication
 5. Annual Reports
 6. Accounts
 7. Ethical Framework
- 4.3 Taken as a whole, the Tests exceed the statutory duties with which all parish councils should be complying as a matter of course, and represent standards which an efficient, well-run parish council that actively engages with and works for its community should be meeting.
- 4.4 We have designed the Tests to be as straightforward as possible and to include measures that will enable all parish councils, irrespective of size, to attain Quality status if they wish. It is also recognised that parish councils inevitably carry out their duties and communicate with their electorate in different ways depending on size, resources and circumstances.
- 4.5 The Communication Test therefore allows for the different approaches that are taken by parish councils by giving some flexibility in meeting the criteria. This Test includes compulsory and discretionary activities. Although each of the discretionary activities is appropriate for a Quality Parish Council, the Test requires that only some of these additional activities must be undertaken to gain accreditation as a Quality Parish Council.
- Councils can mix and match the items on the additional list as appropriate to their individual circumstances. **Meeting all other Test requirements is mandatory.**
- 4.6 Parish councils will also be required to supply supporting evidence for each of the Tests. As with the Tests themselves, we have tried to ensure the supporting evidence is straightforward, requiring copies of documents that should be readily available. Details of the supporting evidence required can be found at the end of each Test.

TEST 1: ELECTORAL MANDATE

- 4.7 For a parish council to be awarded with Quality status, it will be representative of, and have a mandate to serve its community. On application, the parish council must provide evidence to show that:
- for first accreditation only: at least 80% of all council seats were filled at the beginning of the current four year term by members who stood for election at that time⁴.
- or re-accreditation: all (100%) council seats were filled at the beginning of the current four year term by members who stood for election at that time⁵.

Explanatory notes:

- 4.8 This Test is not intended to force elections where this is not necessary.
- 4.9 'Stood for election' for the purposes of this Scheme means that councillors must have been nominated and stood (or were prepared to stand) as candidates at the last round of

elections. **This does not mean that there must be an election.** It is recognised that in situations where the number of candidates is the same as (or less than) the number of seats on the parish council, then a ballot is not required. In such cases, the candidates are automatically declared 'elected' by the Returning Officer.

- 4.10 Parish councils will be deemed to have met the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test in the event that a ballot was not necessary if evidence can be provided to show that at least 80% (at first accreditation only) of those who became councillors had stood for election.
- 4 Where at an ordinary parish election an insufficient number of persons were validly nominated to fill vacancies, other people may be co-opted or appointed to fill remaining vacancies (see section 21 of the Representation of the People Act 1985 and section 39 of the Representation of the People Act 1983).
- 5 For the purposes of a parish obtaining Quality Status for a further period, any members who had been co-opted or appointed to the parish council rather than elected would need to have retired at or before the election at the beginning of the current four year term ("the last election") (this would not prevent them standing for that election) in order to enable all the seats to be filled by elected members. A vacant seat (whether remaining vacant or subsequently filled) shall not be taken into account for the purpose of the Quality Parish Council Status application where either it arises as a result of a validly nominated candidate for the last election being no longer able to stand at that election, or it arises after 100% of seats were filled by members elected at the last election.

Examples:

1. Parish 'A' has a Council with 8 seats. At the last round of elections, 10 candidates were nominated so a ballot was held and 8 were elected. *This Council **would** meet the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test whether applying for first accreditation or re-accreditation.*
 2. Parish 'B' has a Council with 14 seats. At the last round of elections, 14 candidates were nominated. It wasn't necessary to hold a ballot and the returning officer declared all the candidates elected without one. *This Council **would** meet the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test whether applying for first accreditation or re-accreditation.*
 3. Parish 'C' has a Council with 10 seats. At the last round of elections only 8 candidates were nominated. Again, it wasn't necessary to hold a ballot and the returning officer declared the 8 candidates elected without a ballot. Shortly after the elections, Parish 'C' co-opted two members to the council to fill the two vacancies. *This Council **would** meet the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test, but only for first accreditation.*
 4. Parish 'D' has a council with 10 seats. At the last round of elections only 4 candidates were nominated. 6 members are subsequently co-opted to serve on the council, but neither they, nor any new candidates want to stand for the next election. *This Council **would not** meet the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test.*
 5. Parish 'E' has a council with 11 seats. At the last round of elections only 8 candidates were nominated and duly declared elected by the Returning Officer without a ballot being held. The 8 elected members constitute 72.7% of the total council seats. *This Council **would not** meet the requirements of the Electoral Mandate Test.*
- 4.11 Where a parish is divided into wards, the rules of the Electoral Mandate Test apply without amendment. The Test deals with overall numbers and there is no need for individual wards to meet the 80% requirement.
 - 4.12 We recognise that co-option is necessary in some circumstances to enable parish councils to continue to operate effectively. However, the Government believes that the use of cooption should be restricted to filling sudden vacancies arising mid-term. So, at the elections prior to a Council applying for re-accreditation of Quality status after their first 4 years, any co-opted members must be prepared to stand as candidates, or there must be a sufficient number of new candidates, so that the council can meet the requirements of this Test.

Supporting Evidence

- 4.13 Parish councils will be required to send copies of the latest election returns with their application.

TEST 2: QUALIFIED CLERK

- 4.14 A parish council must be able to demonstrate that it is well run and able to take on the enhanced role that Quality status will bring. All parish councils have a clerk (or proper officer) whose role is to act as day to day manager of the parish council's affairs.
- 4.15 The clerk has responsibility for ensuring that the parish council acts within the law – whatever the size of the parish. S/he also ensures that the parish council is aware of what it can do and implements the decisions that the parish council takes. It is therefore vital that the clerk possesses the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to carry out his or her duties correctly.
- 4.16 Of course, all parish councillors, parish clerks and other employees should undertake training and development but clerks especially may need to take more advanced professional training courses or have additional qualifications. This may be especially relevant for some of the larger parish councils where management, financial or other professional qualifications and training may well be of value.
- 4.17 So parish councils are urged to support clerks and other employees in gaining the relevant knowledge and skills required. There are a number of ways in which support can be provided to those studying for qualifications. Support may range from time off to attend courses to financial incentives for attaining particular qualifications.
- 4.18 For accreditation as a Quality Parish Council, the clerk to the council must hold one of the following qualifications:
- Certificate in Local Council Administration awarded by the Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA); or
 - Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy or Local Council Administration awarded by the University of Gloucestershire.⁶
- 4.19 The AQA certificate has been developed by the Steering Group⁷ of the National Training Strategy for parish and town councils. It is the first time that a basic professional qualification has been designed specifically for parish clerks. It has been designed to be applicable to the work of all parish clerks, regardless of the size of their parish councils.

Supporting Evidence

- 4.20 Parish councils will be required to attach a copy of the relevant qualification certificate to the application form.
- 6 Formerly the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education. These qualifications will be accepted provided they were awarded before the end of 2007 by which time it is likely that the AQA Certificate in Local Council Administration will be accepted as one of the modules for the Certificate.
- 7 The Steering Group for the National Training Strategy comprises representatives of Countryside Agency, Defra, ODPM, NALC, SLCC, LGA and parish councils.

TEST 3: COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 4.21 The parish council meeting is where the council makes decisions. Regular, well-run council meetings are crucial if a parish council is to operate effectively and fulfill its role in representing that community. The Quality Criteria, therefore, include requirements surrounding the parish council meeting.
- 4.22 Parish councils are required by law to hold one annual meeting of the parish council.⁸ In addition, they must also meet on at least three other occasions during the year.
- 4.23 The Quality Parish Council scheme goes beyond these minimum requirements of the legislation. For the purposes of this Scheme, the parish council must hold at least 6

meetings each year (including the annual meeting of the parish council), with time allowed at each of these meetings for public participation.

- 4.24 Parish councils will be asked to fill in the number of council meetings held in the previous year and how many of these were open to the public.
- 4.25 The requirements of the Test are as follows:
- the council must meet on at least 6 occasions every year. The annual meeting of the parish council can be counted as one of the six occasions.
 - Notices of the meeting must be publicly displayed at least 3 clear days before each meeting.
 - the minutes of the meeting must be published (subject to any confidentiality requirements or statutory exemptions) within 2 months of the meeting and available for inspection by any elector in the parish.
 - Time must be allowed at each meeting for public participation.
 - all councillors must attend the meeting unless, of course, there is good reason for absence.

Supporting evidence

- 4.26 Parish councils will be required to attach to their application form, copies of the notices and minutes parish council meetings and copies of the register of councillor attendance, unless this is noted in the minutes of each of the parish council meetings.
- 8 The annual meeting of the parish council should not be confused with the Annual Parish Meeting (also a statutory requirement), which is a meeting of the electors of the parish, not the parish council. The Annual Parish Meeting is not a qualifying meeting for the purposes of this Scheme.

TEST 4: COMMUNICATION

- 4.27 For communities to be involved in shaping the issues that affect them, they need to be fully aware of the work of their parish council. To be eligible for Quality status a parish council must be able to demonstrate that it is effectively communicating and actively engaging the community it represents.
- 4.28 There are mandatory and discretionary elements to this Test.
- 4.29 The mandatory requirements are as follows:
- the council produces and publishes a regular newsletter to local people at least four times a year.
 - the newsletter must include information on the names of councillors and the clerk and how they can be contacted.
 - a synopsis of the annual report should be provided to local people.
 - the newsletter must be readily available at public sites across the parish.
- 4.30 The discretionary requirements comprise a list of other communications activities considered appropriate for a Quality Parish Council. Councils must be meeting at least 9 of the discretionary requirements. The list comprises activities such as mailing the Annual Report to each household, the maintenance of a parish council website, email facilities, councillor surgeries and consultation exercises.

Supporting Evidence

- 4.31 Parish councils will be required to provide examples of the methods used to inform and communicate with the community about parish activities. The supporting evidence will be dependent on the activities the council carries out.

Example:

1. Supporting evidence for the Website activities would be to supply the parish council website address, which can then be visited by the accreditation panel. This would equally apply to the email activity.
2. For activities requiring production of a leaflet or publicity of the work of the council, a copy of each relevant publication should be enclosed with your application.

TESTS 5 TO 7: ANNUAL REPORT, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

- 4.32 The requirements of these Tests concentrate on the accountability and openness of the council.

Annual Report

- 4.33 Many parish councils already publish an annual report to update their communities on the achievements of the council. The production of an annual report is an important link between the council and its electorate as well as demonstrating that the council is open and accountable.

Accountability

- 4.34 Equally, it is crucial that all councils maintain accurate and transparent financial arrangements. All local electors should be allowed adequate and timely access to information, to encourage their involvement in council affairs.
- 4.35 All local authorities must comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/533). These Regulations have updated the rules governing the way local authorities keep accounts, so that the accounting burden is proportionate to the size of the authority, and to make improvements to provisions relating to local authority corporate governance and accountability. The Regulations came into effect on 1 April 2003 and parish councils will want to study the guidance that is available with the regulations and '*Governance and accountability in local councils in England and Wales. A practitioners' guide*' issued jointly by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks

Conduct

- 4.36 Parish councillors play an important role representing their local communities. In some cases, parish councils have budgets of tens of thousands of pounds; parish councils are also statutory consultees on planning issues. Local people have a right to expect that their local representatives are observing proper standards of conduct. Parish councils – like all other forms of council – were required to adopt a new code of conduct from May 2002, in line with the Local Government Act 2000.
- 4.37 A requirement of the code is that all councillors sign up to the code and register their interests. The code of conduct (see the Parish Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2001, S.I. 2001/3576) sets out the standards that are expected from parish councillors. Observing the code helps to protect councillors from accusations of improper conduct, and gives confidence to electors that their elected representatives are behaving impartially.

Supporting evidence

- 4.38 Parish councils will be required to supply a copy of the latest annual report, a copy of the latest audited accounts, and a copy of the council's code of conduct and the date of its adoption.

Community Activities

- 4.39 There is an additional page at the end of the application form. This page requests information on the current activities of the parish council.
- 4.40 This section is not part of the Quality Test framework but any information provided will be of interest to the Panel in reaching their decision on applications for Quality status, as well as to principal local authorities and to ODPM and Defra. This section is the Council's opportunity to include any relevant information on how the council currently operates and give a fuller picture of your individual activities.
- 4.41 The information will also be of use to Government in building up an accurate picture of the activities of parish councils across England and to improve the Quality Parish Council Scheme for the future.

Checks on Payments by Councillors

Existing good audit practice has been for members of the Committee to be assigned to undertake random checks on three cheque payments per meeting. The Committee needs to confirm it will continue this practice and establish a schedule of members to undertake these checks.

Councillors Allowances (Referred from Full Council)

The Town Council is still awaiting a response from St Edmundsbury Borough Council regarding the Parish Remunerations Panel.

Highways/Footways Maintenance/Improvement Programme 2004/2005

Suffolk County Council are preparing a schedule of highways/footways maintenance for incorporation into their 2004/2005 programme. They would like this Council to contribute to the process. A form has been prepared for members to use within their Wards to highlight areas needing attention, for return to the Town Clerk and compilation into a return to Suffolk County Council by 31st December.

Highway/Footway Maintenance Required

Name of Road or Path	From House No. to House No. or from Road to Road	Problem (Trips, holes, other hazards)	Is this a major route (lots of traffic/path to school), or lightly used (cul de sac/just serves a few houses) ?	Priority You Would Give It (1=high, 9=low)

Submitted by:.....

Committee Budget

Expenditure

	2003/4		2004/5	Notes
101 Buildings				
101/1 Maintenance of Building Fabric	£ 530		£0	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04
101/2 Cleaning of Interior	£ 989		£0	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04
101/3 Maintenance of Grounds	£ 900		£0	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04
101/5 Rents	£ 227	£	245	
101/6 Security	£ 350	£	350	Will decrease if Bevan House relet
101/7 Fixtures and Fittings	£ 500	£	550	
	£ 3,496	£	1145	
102 Services				
102/1 Water	£ 189	£	150	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04
102/2 Rates	£ 2,453	£	1,227	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04 Will decrease if Bevan House relet
102/3 Heat, Light & Power	£ 1,105	£	250	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04 Will decrease if Bevan House relet
102/4 Waste Disposal	£ 181	£	0	Subject to move to Arts Centre by 1 April 04
	£ 3,928	£	1,527	
103 Office Costs				
103/1 Postage	£ 1,474	£	1,489	
103/2 Stationery	£ 1,650	£	1,850	Need to change addresses on letter heads etc.
103/3 Telephones	£ 2,203	£	2,270	
103/4 Equipment - Hire & Maintenance	£ 1,470	£	1,544	
	£ 6,797	£	7,153	
104 Information Technology				
104/2 Support Contracts	£ 240	£	252	
104/3 Repairs	£ 250	£	300	
104/4 Website	£ 1,158	£	1,216	
	£ 1,648	£	1,768	
105 Other Administrative Costs				
105/2 Membership Subscriptions	£ 963	£	1,100	
105/4 Accountancy & Audit Fees	£ 2,650	£	2,915	
105/5 Bank Charge	£ 1,480	£	1,510	
105/6 Books & Journals	£ 215	£	237	
105/7 Sundry Expenses	£ 280	£	294	
105/8 Electoral Costs	£ 1,000	£	1,000	

105/9 Recruitment Costs	£ 0	£ 500
	£ 6,588	£ 7,556
106 Insurances	£ 2,805	£ 3,226
107 Member Costs		
107/1 Travel & Subsistence	£ 250	£ 263
107/2 Training	£ 750	£ 788
	£ 1,000	£ 1,051
108 Public Relations		
108/1 Mayoral Allowances	£ 675	£ 675
108/2 Civic Expenses	£ 971	£ 1050
	£ 1,646	£ 1,725
TOTAL	£27,908	£ 24,301
2/1 Principal Councils Grants	£ 42,192	£ 42,192
4 Interest Receivable - 7 Day Notice	£ 320	£ 272
6 Interest Receivable - Current A/C	£ 20	£ 0
8 Interest Receivable - 30 Day Notice	£ 3,600	£ 3,060
9 Long Term Deposit Interest	£ 2,600	£ 1,790
Total - Finance	£ 48,732	£ 47,314
Net Change	Expenditure	-£ 3,607
	Income	+£ 1,418
	TOTAL	-£ 2,189

Town Council Budget 2004/2005

The net rise that each Committee has recommended to its budget for 2004/2005 is as follows:-

Change in Community First Budget	£	1,535
Change in Leisure Committee Budget	£	5,150
Change in Personnel Committee Budget	£	7,862
Change in F & GP Budget	£	1,311

The net effect of these changes, before taking any account of (minor) changes to the property base is an increase in annual Band D Council Tax of £2.12. The increase in 2003/2004 was £1.74.

The Charity Commission recommends that Charities hold 15-25% of their annual turnover in reserves. For the Town Council this would mean an increase in the level of reserves held, from just over £50,000 to £75,000 (15%) or £125,000 (25%).

To achieve the minimum level of reserves within two years will mean returning £13,000 to balances each year. However in 2003/2004 the Council Tax was reduced by using £13,900 **from** balances. Therefore to restore balances by a net £13,000 means returning a total of £26,900 to balances in total, equivalent to a further £3.63 increase in annual Band D Council Tax.

Whilst the amounts seem well in excess of inflation, the rises only equate to approximately 11p per week.