

Cllrs Lorna Dupré and Mark Inskip

MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2024

District Council budget

The district council's Finance & Assets Committee will meet on Thursday 25 January. There will be a budget report on the agenda, though we know from past experience that this may bear no relation to the actual budget to be set on Tuesday 20 February.

The district council's share of the 2023/24 was £142.14 at Band D. We are expecting that the council's Conservative administration will freeze its share of the council tax once again.

At the end of November it was reported that the council was projecting a year-end underspend of £757,000, against a budget of £16.85 million. £700,000 of this can be attributed to the council benefiting from rises in interest rates on its deposits.

And also

It is possible that the Finance & Assets Committee meeting on 25 January will receive the Full Business Case for the Conservatives' crematorium at Mepal.

Operational Services

The district council's Operational Services Committee will meet on Wednesday 31 January.

Sanctuary Housing

The council held a 'behind closed doors' seminar with Sanctuary Housing on Thursday 14 December. Top of our list of questions was what is being done about the large number of empty properties—something like five per cent of Sanctuary's stock. Their response was that they were prioritising currently occupied homes in need of repair, and finding sourcing capacity to tackle empty properties in clusters. We have been following up a number of enquiries about Sanctuary repairs and long-term empty properties in local villages.

District Council constitution

Recommendations are being finalised for presentation to February's Full Council meeting for changes to the council's constitution. These will include recommendations about the rules of procedure, responsibility for functions, the

Code of Conduct for councillors, and the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on councillors' allowances.

Taxi licensing policy

The Licensing Committee met on 13 December to discuss changes to the council's taxi licensing policy. It resolved, unanimously, that:

- The base model price for executive vehicles at point of manufacture be increased from £35,000 to £50,000. The reason given for this change was that without this increase it was likely that a much larger number of vehicles might be eligible for an exemption from displaying plates and drivers from displaying badges whilst driving the vehicle.
 - All new petrol and diesel taxis (including hybrids and LPG conversions) should be Euro 6 compliant.
 - All existing Euro 3 taxis should be Euro 6 compliant within two years, and all existing Euro 4 taxis should be Euro 6 compliant within five years. This will reduce carbon emissions.
 - Rules regarding landline phones at taxi operator bases be amended. This is because most bookings are made via broadband internet connections and VOIP telephones.
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Meet your councillors

Our next surgeries will take place on

- Monday 5 February, 6:30-7:30PM
- Monday 4 March, 6:30-7:30PM

in the Community Room at Sutton School. Between surgeries, residents can continue to contact us by email, Facebook, or phone.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr Mark Inskip

District Councillors for the Sutton ward