

## Dunkirk Parish Council

2D Briar Close, Bramble Lane, Wye TN25 5HB

Dear Councillors

Extraordinary Meeting Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 - Dunkirk Village Hall 19.30

### 1. For decision: To agree the budget and precept claim for 2020-2021

Meeting papers are:

- Draft budget
- Draft precept claim form (derived from the draft budget)
- A copy of the precept claim form agreed last year as a comparison.

As Dunkirk PC's financial situation has changed significantly in recent months, the figures reflect these changes. To enable you to compare the budget and precept claim with recent years Jeff will open the meeting with a short introductory statement. This preface is for the record and will assist any members of the public who may be present. (Jeff will also provide each councillor with a colour copy of the budget and the draft precept claim tonight, so there is no need to print your own). As an introduction to the process the following quote from Charles Arnold-Baker, may help you. *'The local council in calculating its precept must as far as possible secure that it will suffice for four classes of items, namely:*

- a) next year's expenditure, including an allowance for contingencies;*
- b) outstanding expenditure incurred in previous years;*
- c) expenditure likely to be incurred before the precepted sum becomes available;*
- d) payments to a sinking fund, capital fund or renewal and repairs fund.'*

Local Council Administration (the weighty reference manual that you agreed to buy last week)

### 2. Public open session

Please note that item 3 tonight is a Public Open Session. This has long been considered good practice by NALC, and indeed it is standard practice in most parish council meetings. For certainty, and to avoid any difficulties that may arise, please be aware of the legalities involved. Members of the public have no legal right to speak or interrupt a parish council meeting while it is in session.

Although every parish council must hold all its meetings in public, they are not, repeat not 'public meetings'. Therefore, to enable the public to have their say, meetings need careful management. Normally, the chairman will suspend the parish council meeting for the duration of the public open session. This procedural device permits members of the public to speak, usually for a limited period of time, say three minutes, per speaker, up to a maximum of 15 minutes in total. Councillors will listen to what the public say. However, public open sessions must not turn into a free-for-all. Therefore, regardless of what the public may say, councillors must remain detached and not allow themselves to be provoked into replying. The chairman will normally end the public session by thanking the public for their contributions, acknowledge or clarify any matters of fact, close the public session and reopen the formal parish council meeting. The minute will reflect this process.

Regards,

Richard Bartley

Clerk, Dunkirk Parish Council