

## **BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING 2017/18**

A great deal of preparation and discussion goes each year into the setting of the budget for the Town Council and this, of course, leads to the precept request. Bishop's Castle Town Council take this responsibility very seriously and decisions are not made lightly.

For several years now the precept has been kept artificially low and this has affected the amount of care and attention the Council are able to lavish on the facilities within the town. For the forthcoming year we have looked hard at our priorities, responsibilities and assets with a view to improving, maintaining and developing all aspects of these for the community. SpArC, and its survival, was, naturally, a large part of our discussions and Councillors felt that to show their support for this facility was vital. It was also recognised that in persuading others in the surrounding areas to contribute with some financial backing for SpArC would be futile if the Town Council was not seen to be a major contributor.

We are sure that many of you will have visited the Public Hall and recognise that some considerable work needs to be undertaken to make the area a profitable, sustainable and safe space. The new committee have worked hard to do this, but the fabric of the building is in need of an update and the Town Council recognise that this too is a responsibility that they must not shirk. Add these obligations to the maintenance and development of the Playing Fields and other recreational areas, the provision of Allotments, the upkeep of the Public Toilets, Street Lights, Town Hall and we are starting to look at an ever increasing budget.

The Town Council also recognise the need to continue to work and enhance the appearance of our lovely town and make it a pleasant and attractive place to live and it is to be remembered that we have taken over quite a few responsibilities from Shropshire Council.

All of these aspects have been taken into account and this statement is to inform all residents that you will indeed find an increase in our part of the Precept (we cannot, at this stage estimate the amount of increase that Shropshire Council will be adding). It is thought that to support these aspects of the town the community will be charged an additional 70p per month. We think the results will be worth it and we hope that you do too.