

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY DECEMBER 9th 2025

ITEM NO: 12 – Consideration of the 2026/27 Precept request to NFDC

Consideration of this item is predicated on the assumption that under Agenda Item 11 of this meeting the members agreed to a suggested spending budget for 2026/27 of £30,640 of which £30,340 was to be covered by Precept.

The Precept funding requirement of £30,340 would mean an increase in the Parish Council Precept for 2026/27 of £1,975 over the £28,365 Precept set for 2025/26.

NFDC have supplied to us the provisional 2026/27 “Tax Base” for the Parish of Copythorne - which is the equivalent of 1,242.70 Band D properties, an increase of 5.80 Band D properties over 2025/26.

(Note, this increase in Band D properties is not a reflection of additional properties in the parish but a change to the expected number of existing properties paying Council Tax in 2026/27.)

The £1,975 increase in Precept for 2026/27 equates to an extra £1.48 per annum (£1.03pa in 2025/26) for a Band D property. It takes the Copythorne Parish precept from £22.93 per annum to £24.41 per annum for a Band D property.

At the lowest end of Council Tax bandings a “Band A” property would pay 67% of this increase (99p per annum) and at the highest end a “Band H” property would pay 200% of this increase (£2.96 per annum).

It remains the case that no Government cap applies currently on Town/Parish Council percentage increases. There is no guarantee that this will continue and for Councils such as Copythorne who start from a very low Precept value, in part due to historical decision making in respect of past Precept calculations, any cap could make it very difficult for the Council to raise funding to cover projects and costs in the future, as our administration costs would progressively rise, consuming the majority of the budget, leaving no funds for any development activity.

Last year, the Council approved a budget of £30,265, of which £28,365 was covered by Precept.

The Council’s General Reserves as at November 30th 2025 stood at £9,747. Our Internal Auditor suggests for a council of our size General Reserves should be maintained at between 33% to 50% of the annual budget. Currently ours stands at the lower end of this recommended range at just under 32% of the proposed 2026/27 Budget. Therefore, as Responsible Financial Officer of the Council, I do not feel that any of the approved 2026/27 Budget should be covered by a transfer from General Reserves.

Recommendation

That Council approves the submission to NFDC of a 2026/27 Precept request of £30,340.

**David Rigby,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Copythorne Parish Council
December 1st 2025**