

DRAFT BUDGET 2024-25

OVERVIEW

- Taking on responsibility for open spaces, public conveniences, allotments management (wholly/in part) and the Leisure Centre Head Lease will represent a big step change for RTC.
- *Devolved services* Still waiting for new/updated information from RDC – so RTC's budget requirements are difficult to estimate. Prices will be sought shortly from the grounds maintenance contractors who have expressed interest in working with RTC from October 2024 – and a cleaning contractor is pricing cleaning and opening/closing two public conveniences. An additional £22k has been provided for the devolved services budget/reserve.
- Because of the level of uncertainty at this point – and pressing need to agree a budget and precept - the Payroll budget does not include provision for additional staffing requirements associated with devolved services – including providing/identifying in-house additional management and contract monitoring capacity.
- As from December 2023, RTC is no eligible for 100% small business rates relief on the Town Hall.
- Wedding/Ceremony receipts have recovered post-covid and are expected to remain strong.
- Ghost Walks revenue - utilising online booking and sales technology – has increased accordingly.
- The skatepark is in urgent need of repairs. Proposed replacement of ply with Skatelite (longer lasting and less maintenance) – and removal of one 'impractical' item of equipment.
- Payroll cost of living increase is 4.6%.
- It is forecast that the Town Steward Service Earmarked Reserve will be entirely depleted by March 2024.
- The Heritage Centre needs a redesigned flat roof (to address the longstanding issue of occasional rain water ingress) – suggested funding source: capital asset reserves.
- The exterior side and rear brickwork of the Town Hall is overdue for repointing and windows need to be replaced and repaired.
- Proposed purchase of 14 councillor gowns – paid over 3 years (interest-free). Most of the Town Crier's uniform needs to be replaced.
- It is assumed that RTC will collect the 2024 allotments rents.
- The Hospital can no longer fund the Leisure Centre 'community governance model' project/transition co-ordinators. They could be funded for 6-9 months from RTC's CIL receipts.
- The estimated cost of 6 months of Leisure Centre buildings insurance premium is £3,075.
- Provision to appoint an architect to create a design concept for an affordable housing scheme at the former TG school.
- The suggested precept of £25,687 increases the Band D charge by 34p a week.