

Press release from Newton Abbot Town Council

Date: 29/01/2021

Embargo: for immediate use

### Investment in post-Covid Newton Abbot

AN extra 11p per week on council tax bills will help Newton Abbot prepare for post-Covid recovery. The 5.6 per cent rise in the Town Council's share of the precept will take the annual cost for a Band D property to £107.63 or £2.07 per week.

Reasons for the increase were given by Cllr Colin Parker, chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.

He said the pandemic had resulted in fewer new homes being built than expected, resulting in less income than predicted.

Additionally, the Town Council had made economic recovery its number one priority and was assisting businesses and residents.

'We have a difficult year ahead, and no doubt beyond that, but Newton Abbot will prosper,' said Cllr Parker.

'We are a town that's growing in size and importance, we must think carefully about how we make that work for everyone.

'The lower council tax base than we expected is a pity but won't reduce our aspirations.

'We have two new excellent maintenance staff who are making a real difference around town, as seen by thousands of people when a video of them steam cleaning the streets proved very popular.

'It demonstrated how we're investing in the town centre, making it an attractive place for shoppers when better times return.

'We have employed Kate Green, our Community Engagement Officer, who, in line with all the restrictions, is very busy arranging activities with residents as social well-being is of great importance.

'And our Town Development Manager, Sally Henley, is in constant contact with retailers, helping them through these challenging times and preparing for life after the pandemic.'

The council awarded grants worth £13,160 in 2020, the biggest recipients being Citizens Advice Teignbridge who received £3,000 and Newton Abbot Community Mutual Aid who were awarded £2,750.

'Supporting the community is our number one priority and Newton Abbot Town Council will ensure it has the resources, both in terms of income and expert staff, to achieve that,' said Cllr Parker.

'Any increase in council tax bills is regrettable but given the challenges we face I believe 11p per week isn't too much to ask.'