

A TOWN COUNCIL **WILL** COST YOU MORE

■ It has been decided that the District and County Councils will be abolished in 2020 and a new unitary authority formed. The opposition parties, instead of welcoming the reduction in bureaucracy that this will bring, want to create a new Town Council in High Wycombe, which will have very few powers but will cost a lot to set up and will have the ability to spend your money.

A Community Governance Review has been triggered which will decide whether to recommend that:

- ◆ High Wycombe stays the same as it is now, with Charter Trustees ensuring the continuation of the mayoralty and a town committee of members elected to the new Buckinghamshire Council to oversee things like the cemetery and allotments,

or whether new levels of local government are introduced, either:

- ◆ a single Town Council for the whole of the High Wycombe unparished area;
- ◆ the town is split into smaller areas, each having their own Parish Councils.

These recommendations would then go to the Executive of the new shadow authority for decision. The decision would be implemented in 2020 with elections being held in May for the new Councils, if that is the outcome. If we continue as we are now, the Charter Trustees will ensure that High Wycombe will continue to have a Mayor, an office that dates back to the 13th century. If we have a Town Council, the Mayor may continue but the role will change as they will also be the Chairman of the Town Council. If the town is split into Parishes the Mayor will be lost.

Residents will have the opportunity to make their representations regarding any proposals and they can do that by sending their views to elections@wycombe.gov.uk.

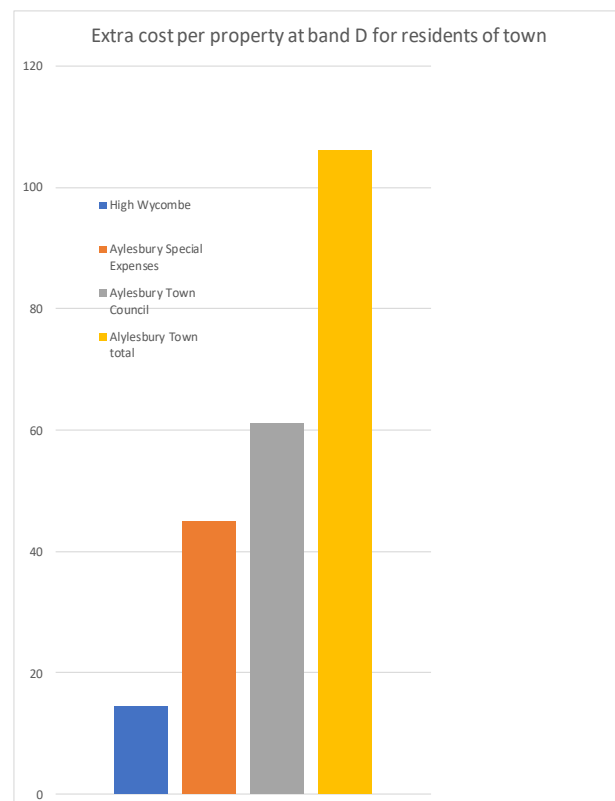
All the Town Councils in Buckinghamshire cost their residents more than the existing High Wycombe Town Committee does.

In Aylesbury, where a new Town Council was created a few years ago, the Town Precept (part of the Council Tax bill) for the residents of the town has more than doubled to pay for, among other things, 27 members of staff. The residents also pay an extra amount to the district council to pay for things like recreation grounds and community centres in the town.

In High Wycombe residents pay an extra £14.50 a year for the local services they enjoy, in Aylesbury the amount is £106.13 a year for broadly similar services.

Since Wycombe District Council has the lowest Council tax in Buckinghamshire, the charges in Wycombe under the new Unitary Authority will rise to align with the other districts. The additional cost of a Town Council will give residents of the town a double whammy.

The Conservatives are arguing against adding an extra layer of local government, as bureaucracy cost money. Unnecessary bureaucracy diverts your Council Tax away from the services everyone relies on.



ALL CHANGE IN BUCKS IN 2020

■ After being created in 1974, Wycombe District Council will cease to exist at the end of next April to be replaced by a new authority called Buckinghamshire Council. This will be a single council covering the whole of Buckinghamshire and replacing the current County Council and the four District Councils. The intention of the reorganisation is to make local government in Buckinghamshire more efficient but since Wycombe District Council has the lowest Council Tax in the County it is likely that in future the council tax in Wycombe will increase to match those in other parts of the county.

The Government is expected to make the orders creating the new Buckinghamshire Wide District Council in the next few weeks and this means that the council elections that were due to be held this May will no longer happen. Instead, the existing District Councillors will continue for another year until the end of March 2020. An election will then be held in May 2020 to elect members to the new Unitary Council.

The reorganisation will be carried out by a shadow authority which will consist of all the councillors currently elected to a council in Buckinghamshire, with an executive made up of nine councillors from the county council and two from each of the four district councils. Local councillor Tony Green has been appointed as one of the representatives from Wycombe.

COUNCIL TAX DOWN FOR HIGH WYCOMBE

■ Wycombe District Council has set its part of the Council tax for the new financial year. The Council voted to keep it at the same level as last year. On the recommendation of the High Wycombe Town Committee, the Council also agreed to reduce the High Wycombe portion of the Council tax by £5 a year. Unfortunately all the other organisations who charge Council Tax decided to increase their share, by 13.2% in the case of the Thames valley Police. This will mean in spite of the best endeavours of your WDC Councillors, your overall Council tax will go up for next year.

TOTTERIDGE RECREATION GROUND

■ The work in Totteridge Rec has been moving forward. New outdoor fitness equipment has been installed around the new perimeter path. This can be used by people of all ages and all abilities.



There are also a couple of outdoor table tennis tables. The relaying of the cricket square is still outstanding and will be completed when the weather is suitable.

YOUR CONSERVATIVE TEAM FOR TERRIERS AND MERSHAM HILL



Tony Green represents you on Wycombe District Council



Arif Hussain represents you on Wycombe District Council and Bucks County Council



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