

19/149 PARISH PRECEPT: AS REQUESTED BY CLLR KARL STRAW

Background

As reported in the autumn Broadsheet an average household in Broadclyst is paying a parish precept of £233.83 in 2019/20. This has risen from £148.58 in 2015/16 or by over 66%. The increases over the past four years now means that Broadclyst parish is now one of the most expensive parish precepts in the country. The Broadclyst parish is the 2nd most expensive precepting parish in Devon and the fourth most expensive non unitary parish in the country, out of 9,792.

In comparison other large local East Devon Parishes pay a much lower charge: Seaton pays £101.60, Axminster pays £88.64, Sidmouth pays £72.36, Honiton pays £71.08, Exmouth pays £60, and Ottery pays 49.03. The average East Devon parish precept charge is £46.55 and in Devon of the 336 precepting parishes the average is £42.20.

The Broadsheet article explains how the parish itself has “relatively few duties”, and the statutory duty to provide services falls to the County and District councils. It then explains that “Broadclyst Parish Council embraces the opportunities [of] not just continuing but enhancing service delivery”

By accepting the statutory responsibilities and taking over services not provided by the District and County councils and charging local residents through the parish precept, Broadclyst Parish Council is allowing the upper tiers of local government to abrogate their responsibilities.

Hardworking families and residents are already facing higher energy and food bills so it is unfair that the parish council has chosen to take on costs that should be paid for out of the District and County taxation. The parish should be lobbying the higher tiers of local government to treat parishes fairly and not focus services on just urban areas.