

A service to suit people's pockets



FACED with a decreasing share of funding support from Central Government, Wealden District Council is conscious of the need to **keep Council Tax rises to a minimum**, particularly in a district where many householders are retired.

By consulting with its own scrutiny committees and the Wealden public at large, the Council is carrying out a major review of its services and spending. It aims to keep Council Tax increases between 3.5%- 5 % during the next three years. Rather than see its services face 'death by a thousand cuts,' the **Medium Term Financial Strategy** sets out to define what sort of council Wealden is.

This review has looked at:

- What services are compulsory, and what services optional?
- What services can be best provided by the council, by the private sector or by non-profit organisations?
- What services could be successfully charged for?
- What services should be improved?

The people of Wealden were asked about their spending priorities in a major consultation exercise involving parish councils, the internet and a large scale telephone survey of residents. The Council's all-party Select Overview & Scrutiny Committee also carried out a review car parking policy in the main Wealden towns of Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham, Heathfield and Polegate. Town centre car parking continues to be free in

Wealden, one of the few districts in England that does not charge for this type of public facility.

"We face major external financial challenges. We must rise to meet them by finding modern methods of providing services in the 21st century,"

**Councillor Nigel Coltman,
Leader,
Wealden District Council.**

