



FITTLEWORTH PARISH COUNCIL - CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT 2020-21

The financial position at the 31 March 2021 showed a balance of £25,348.49 (2019/20 - £22,232.75) in the combined accounts. The Internal Audit was carried out remotely on 12th May. The Annual Return will be put forward at the Parish Council meeting on 21st June for approval, and once approved it will be submitted to the External Auditor soon after. The unaudited accounts will be available for inspection between 3rd June and 14th July and the full audited accounts will be available for inspection in due course and will be advertised in the normal way.

Income

We received £44,606.44 (2019/19 - £30,264.33) in income last year, most of which was the precept of £25,080.00 (2019/20 - £20,900.00), Grants - £12,760.92 (grants two operation Watershed projects & Grants for Hesworth Common) (2019/20 - £4,800 (Grants for Hesworth Common) and reclaimed VAT - £3,207.23 (2019/20 - £1,355.12).

We also have investments with the Charities Investment Fund, one is an Allotment for Burying Ground and the other is an Allotment for the Labouring.

The remaining income is from the Sports Association's Licence fee agreement and share of insurance cover; minimal land rent from the Bowls and Rifle clubs and the Scouts; income from a Wayleave Agreement with SSE for Hesworth Common; and interest on the Reserve and Birchwalks Wood accounts.

It should be noted that the licence from the Sports and Social Club is being paid at an agreed, reduced rate.

The Parish Council, via the Recreation Ground Charity, receives rent from the Community Shop. All rents received, are transferred to Fittleworth Parish Council to be used towards the upkeep of the Recreation Ground. The funds are separated in the accounts in the Ear Marked Reserve – Playground & Recreation Ground Reserve.

Expenditure

Our Expenditure last year was £ 41,480.70 (2019/20 - £34,023.12) this was over budget (budget - £34,211.00).

Our main expenditure items were

- Recreation Ground £3,760 - The main elements are the maintenance contractor (£3,270) & Tree work (£490)
- Village maintenance £6,796 – The main elements are the maintenance contractor -£701, Tree work & felling dangerous trees -£490, Litterbin waste collection was £697, Operation watershed Little Bognor Culvert works - £4,862 (funding received to cover 100% of costs).
- Hesworth Common £3,995
- Clerk's wages £16,912.
- Maintenance of our buildings £260;
- Insurance - £2,018
- Website & parish council emails £598
- Highways Report re Limbourne Lane Development - £499

The parish council looks after **assets** worth over half a million pounds which have to be maintained. These include the sports pavilion, the Bowls pavilion, the Millennium Arch, the playground equipment, the Recreation Ground and Hesworth Common.

Maintenance covers the upkeep of the two pavilions, general repair work, tree surgery, bin collection, lighting, playground inspections and repair of equipment.

The **Recreation Ground** and other public areas such as the Centenary Gardens are again being maintained by Grasstex. Once lockdown restrictions have been lifted the contract will be put out to tender for a 3 year period.

Insurance

This is a big expense each year £2,018 (2019/20 - £1,961). In September 2021 we will be renegotiating our next 3 year agreement. We hope to secure a significant reduction in the annual cost.

Donations

A total of £961 was donated to the various clubs and societies around the village.

For the year ended 31 March 2021 under statute, the Parish Council can make a total payment for donations of £8.41 per elector (2019/20 - £8.10 per elector). Therefore, a total sum of £6,374.78 (2019/20 - £6,139.80) for s.137 payments is allowed based on the total number of electors for Fittleworth of 758 for 2020/21. WE are way within the allowed donation payments.

Annual donations made in January 2020:

Air Ambulance	£100.00
Burton & Coates PCC	£100.00
Fittleworth Over 60s club	£150.00
Fittleworth PCC (includes £50 for Village Magazine)	£300.00
Fittleworth Playgroup	£100.00
Minibus	£100.00
Petworth Nursing Home	<u>£50.00</u>
Sub-total	£900.00
COIF Annual interest paid to the Parochial Church Council	£61.60
Total	<u>£961.60</u>

Hesworth Common

Hesworth Common is 100.5 acres of registered Common Land purchased from The Duke of Norfolk in 1979. The Hesworth Common account has a balance of £6,642.31 (2019/20 - £9,486.70). £106 was received from SSE for the Wayleave Agreement for the year, and a rural grant of £2,400. Expenditure for Tree work, spraying, contribution to new Information Board and car park maintenance totalled £3,995 (2019/20 -£2,563).

Birchwalks Wood

Birchwalks Wood account has a balance of £5,028.50 (2019/20 £5,206.38) which was left in trust to the Parish Council and we cannot touch these funds for anything other than maintaining the woods. In 2019/20 there were no costs incurred, and in 2020/21 £180 was sent on spraying. Interest received £2.12.

Reserves

I have set out below the reserves at the year end.

PERIOD ENDED:	31 March 2021							
			Brought forward @1/4/20	Income	Expenditure	Transfer EMR	Inter bank account Transfer	Carried forward @
Reserves Balances (Including Ear Marked Reserves - EMR)								31/03/2021
General reserve								
FPC Current Account			£283.09	£44,602.15	-£31,119.13	-£13,340.92	-£2,458.17	-£2,032.98
FPC Bonus Saver Account			£5,285.58	£2.17	£0.00		£0.00	£5,287.75
								£3,254.77
EMR - Operation Watershed reserve					-£4,862.30	£ 9,860.92		£4,998.62
EMR - Playground / Recreation Ground reserve			£1,050.00		-£826.71	£ 1,930.00		£2,153.29
EMR - Road Safety costs					£0.00	£300.00		£300.00
EMR - Reserve for asset replacement/ maintenance			£721.00		£0.00	£1,000.00		£1,721.00
EMR - Winter Management Plan - Road Clearing costs			£500.00		£0.00	£250.00		£750.00
EMR - Legal & Professional fees			£500.00		£0.00	£0.00		£500.00
Total for FPC accounts								£13,677.68
EMR - Hesworth Common - bank account			£8,686.70	£0.00	-£4,502.56		£2,458.17	£6,642.31
EMR - Birchwalk Woods			£5,206.38	£2.12	-£180.00		£0.00	£5,028.50
			£22,232.75	£44,606.44	-£41,490.70	£0.00	£0.00	£25,348.49
			Per Annual Return					£0.00

Please note that out of the total Cash Balance at the year end of £25,348.49 only £4,998.62 (2019/20 - £4,768.67) is available in the general reserve. This is 19.93% of the precept (2018/19 - 22.8%). Good practice is that a Parish Council has general reserves of around 50% of the precept, however it should never exceed double the precept. The Ear Marked Reserves are excluded in this calculation.

2020/21 Precept

At the Parish Council meeting in January 2021 it was agreed that for 2020/21 the precept would increase from £25,080 (2020/21) to £28,215 (2021/22). This is an increase of 12.5%. The 20/21 precept of £25,080 is the equivalent Council Tax Band D charge of £46.56 per annum. The £28,215 precept for 2021/22 results in the equivalent Council Tax Band D charge of £52.95 per annum.

Please contact the Clerk if you have any further questions about the Financial report.

Louise Collis, Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Fittleworth Parish Council