

**Fittleworth Parish Council Budget Report 2024-25– prepared by Parish Clerk, Rachel Gorvin, for discussion at the Full Council Meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

At 31st March 2023 the Parish Council held £9994 in ear marked reserves (EMR) and £18043 in General Reserves. General Guidance recommends an appropriate level of general reserve as circa six months equivalent of precept, so as the General Reserve equates to just over 50% of the precept, we ended the year in a sound financial position.

The current Q2 budget forecast indicates that the 2023-24 budget is on target and we will not have to fund any overspend from the general reserve unless we face unexpected expenditure in the second half of the year.

Several assumptions have been made for the 2024-25 Budget.

**Income**

1. Pavilion Licence fee remains at £3600.
2. Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship Grant for Hesworth Common applied for but not yet approved.
3. RGC increases its contribution to Recreation Ground and Playground Maintenance to £2730, in line with the Shop rent increase.
4. The Shop is profitable and donates £500 to Playground Maintenance.

**Expenditure**

5. Millennium Arch renovations will be completed and fully funded by donations in 2023-24 but EMR should be maintained for future years at £500 a year.
6. Trees continue to need maintenance and sufficient budget needs to be provided, £5250 in 2024-25 of which £2500 is added to EMR.
7. No inflation increase for Grasstex, but an additional £383 per year for a spring cut around the village gates.
8. SID device to be moved every 2 weeks by contractor, estimated cost £3400, (under budgeted in 2023-24).
9. No further provision for traffic calming measures have been included, TRO, Serpent Trail Improvements and any other measures will need to be funded by Grants and/or donations.
10. Limborne Lane CIL of £61k has been received and is held in an EMR.
11. S106 funding of **£4000** for TRO on the Fleet is still available but not included in budget - if CHS bid is successful it won't be required.
12. CIL funding for Hesworth Common Heathland restoration £5749 and Birchwalks Wood planting £1500 is still available but not included in budget as only released on submission of quotes.

The proposed budget for 2024-25 shows an increase in expenditure from 2023-24, which allows for inflationary increases, tree survey and tree works arising from this, and essential FPC running costs. An increase in the precept is required to balance the budget. This report proposes a precept of £40133, an increase of £4459, which is 12.5% more than last year.

As part of the budget process in 2021, the Council agreed a precept increase of 12.5% for 3 years, to allow for reserves to be built and to provide funding for ongoing and future projects. The proposal delivers on these objectives.

Appendix 1 shows the Proposed Budget for 2024-25

Appendix 2 shows the tax band breakdowns for the proposed budget. NB this assumes that the tax base has not changed, we won't know this until CDC send the figures later in the year but not anticipated to vary significantly.

Any questions on the proposed budget and CIL spending are welcomed, however please can these be submitted in advance of the Full Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October to allow the Clerk to investigate and prepare answers.

The resolution is for Council to recommend accepting the budget proposal for 2024-25

## Appendix 1

Fittleworth Parish Council draft budget 2023-24						
	2023-24	2024-25	EMR	Comments (where it comes from/what it pays for)	=/- 23/24	Explanation of Difference from 2023-24
<b>Income</b>						
Precept	35674	40133			4459	Proposed increase in precept 12.50%
Bank Interest	10	552		Increased interest rates and CIL balance	542	Higher interest rate
Investment Dividends	81	81		CCLA COIF	0	
Pavilion Licence Fees	3600	3600		Sports and Social Club	0	Agreed to 31/04/2024
Insurance Repayments	0	0			0	Agreed 2020 no longer paid
Scottish & Southern Electric	107	107		Wayleave payment	0	
Rec Ground Charity Income	2600	2730		Shop rent	130	Assume 5% increase at rent review
Grants Received	0	2000	0	£2k from SDNP 2024-25. Stewardship Scheme Hesworth Common not agreed yet	2000	£4430 Stewardship money if agreed for 23-24
Donations Received	500	500		Donation for Playground maintenance (dependant on Shop performance)	0	
S.106 Contribution	0	0			0	£4000 S106 money for TRO on The Fleet available but not claimed yet.
Rent Income	60	60		Bowls/Rifle/Scouts and Guides	0	
					0	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>42632</b>	<b>49763</b>			<b>7131</b>	<b>Increase in income</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Salary	14510	17555			3045	Clerk salary SCP 28
Payroll Administration	80	80			0	

Administration Running costs	300	500		Postage/Printer Ink/Stationery/Printing	200	Includes additional printing costs for consultations
Internal & External Audit Expenses	480	705		Based on 2022 Internal £390 External £315	225	Under provided in 2022/23
Expenses Councillors	100	100			0	
Insurance	0	0			0	Not used
	2300	2450		2023/24 renewal £2247.19 plus 9.1%	150	Increase in insurance costs
Legal & Professional Fees	2000	1125		RAAC survey	-875	This does not allow for any further project work, that would all have to be financed elsewhere
Subscriptions	545	600		Based on 2023 costs NALC £62/SALCC £144/WSALC £282/Parish online £54/Gatwick £10	55	Under provided in 2022/23
Training	660	350		CPD and courses relevant to current projects	-310	Clerk not starting Cilca training yet
Training Councillors	150	150		Planning and Grant Funding Courses	0	
Village Hall Hire	150	165		Planning meetings room hire	15	Inflation
GDPR - ICO	35	35			0	
I.T. Costs	1504	1900		Netwise £460 /CloudyIT £970/Bankline £0/ Mobile Phone £120/ Rialtas £199	396	Inflation
Chairman's Allowance	0				0	Not used
Grants Paid	981	981		Grants and CCLA income	0	
Asset Replacement	500	500	500	Office equipment	0	May need additional laptop for Planning
Election	250				-250	No election due
Fire Alarm System	600				-600	Fire alarm installed in 2022-23
Insurance	0				0	
Maintenance	430	430		Fire Alarm Checks x 2 and Gas Boiler Safety Check	0	Repairs to come from general maintenance
Gas	0				0	
Security Lights	50	50		Contribution to VH	0	
					0	

Tree Work	3750	5250	2500	To allow for additional work recommended by Tree survey	1500	
Hesworth Maintenance	0	2000		Spraying £900/other £600	2000	£2k from SDNP. Assumes Stewardship Grant is not received.
Playground and Pavilion Maintenance	3185	1500	600	Playground checks and repairs £900	-1685	EMR replaced in 2022/23
Village Maintenance	5522	7057		Grasstex Grass cuts, hedge cuts, leaf clear, clear ditch, Alley Dick and Centenary Gardens/The Swan Green £5522+£382 (Gates). Plus £1000 contingency for other works	1535	Additional grass cutting around gates
Tree Survey	0	1000		Tree survey due 2024	1000	Due 2024
Litter Bin Collection	800	880		CDC Contract	80	Inflation
Watershed Work	0	0			0	
Footpath Maintenance	150	0		Not used	-150	
Litter Picking	0	0		Removed as done by Volunteers	0	
Road Safety	2600	3400		Wilbar move SID 26 times a year (£3120 + 9.1%)	800	£4000 TRO funding from S106 outstanding for The Fleet
Drainage Survey	0				0	Not required
Asset Replacement	1000	1000	1000	Arch/Noticeboard/litter bins/gates	0	Laptop purchased in 2022
Emergency Planning	0			Grit etc	0	Grit supplies adequate
Commemoration expenses	0		0		0	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>42632</b>	<b>49763</b>	4600		7131	Increase in planned expenditure and inflation

Appendix 2

Proposed Budget Breakdown of Precept overall and by Council Tax

<u>Current Year</u>		<u>Next Year (23/24)</u>	<u>Increase</u>
£35,674	-	£40,133	12.50%
538.7	Precept	538.7	0.00%
£66.22	Tax Base	£74.50	12.50%
	Band D		
	Band D increase per £1,000 precept rise per year	£1.86	
Full Breakdown by Band			
<u>Current Year</u>		<u>Next Year</u>	<u>Weekly Increase</u>
£44.15	Band A	£49.67	£0.11
£51.51	Band B	£57.94	£0.12
£58.86	Band C	£66.22	£0.14
£66.22	Band D	£74.50	£0.16
£80.94	Band E	£91.06	£0.19
£95.65	Band F	£107.61	£0.23
£110.37	Band G	£124.17	£0.27
£132.44	Band H	£149.00	£0.32