

Appendix 6 Budget review meeting report

24/9/2020

Budget fundraising group meeting

Apologies; RF, EC

Present: BR, Clerk

Absent: DH, EK

The Clerk had prepared an outline budget forecast for the remainder of the current financial year (to 31/3/20 and then for the following financial year (to 31/3/21). This showed and anticipated deficit of -£15K in 2020-21 rising to -£45K in 2020-22.

The forecast assumed no income for Bracklesham Barn this financial year beyond the £10K small business rate relief grant received in June 2020 due to the ongoing uncertainty caused by the COVID crisis and in anticipation of further closures and restrictions making many activities difficult to run over the winter months. For the next financial year, the forecast income from the Barn had been reduced to £15K (the last full year of income for the Barn was £36K) to allow for ongoing business interruption in the first half of the financial year and then a slow build to re-establish former levels of activity following such a long period of interruption.

The forecast had assumed no change in the tax base (the number of properties contributing to the precept) and no increase in the precept and no cuts to current services and activities already funded by the Parish Council.

The forecast had included taking on the liability for funding the mobile household waste service from WSCC from March 2021, the additional funding requested from CDC to cover the central administration costs of the senior community warden (a contribution towards the costs of Drew Allardice's line manager) and also a contingency of £5K to allow for further requests from tier 1 & 2 authorities to contribute directly towards the costs of community services currently wholly financed by the district and county councils. The forecast also excluded the costs for annual CCTV monitoring of the cameras in the village centre as CDC had indicated that they would be terminating this contract.

The Chairman and Clerk proceeded to assess the budget forecast spreadsheet line by line.

Mot of the costs are fixed – e.g. staff costs, utility and maintenance costs for Bracklesham Barn and the parks and open spaces, governance and admin costs for software and statutory licences, audit fees and other legal requirements.

Areas where there is more 'discretion' over expenditure are the expenditure codes beginning with 42XX, which are the grants that the parish council makes to community organisations and the expenditure codes beginning with 47XX, which are related to community amenities and services.

Items identified that could be removed or reduced from the 2021-22 budget were:

Item	Budgeted	Proposed	Saving
Highway maintenance (this funds additional cutting of the grass verges between the WSCC scheduled cuts)	£1568	£0	£1568
Events	£7500	£2000	£5500
Trees Shrubs & flowers	£2000	£1000	£1000

Item	Budgeted	Proposed	Saving
Marketing and communications	£2000	£1000	£1000
Christmas lights	£10000	£2500	£7500
Household waste recycling service	£11500	£0	£11500
Contingency for additional tier 1 & 2 authority requests	£5000	£0	£5000
Total	£39568.00	£6500.00	£33068.00

The proposed cuts, combined with a precept increase of 3% would lead to a forecast deficit on the budget of £8458 which could be covered via the general reserve, whilst still keeping the overall reserve at an acceptable level.

Items such as Christmas lights, trees and shrubs and events could seek sponsorship to help match fund the parish council contribution, which would hopefully minimise the impact of the cuts for the community. Bringing in the cuts from March 2021 would give the council time to raise sponsorship and donations without impacting on services for residents this year.

Services such as the community warden and youth worker had been prioritised for ongoing funding at their current levels as cuts to these were felt to be counterproductive due to the high probability that reductions in service would lead to increased anti-social behaviour and vandalism and therefore additional maintenance and running costs to the council.