

# Blofield Parish Council

## MEETING TO REVIEW EXPENDITURE TO DATE FOR 2019/20 AND SET A BUDGET FOR 2020/21

Meeting - 25th November, 9:45am -13:45pm

Present –Stuart Smith, Rob Christie, Sarah Dhesi, Mary Moxon, Sarah Osbaldeston

### NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Position at the end of 2018/19:

We end the financial year at 31 March 2019 having spent more than the precept, £53657.89 from the precept (£48,500). (On top of this we spent £50,000 from CIL on Martys Marsh and £16,596.59 from reserves. (on churchyard gate, courthouse maintenance, woodbastwick road trod and MHH alarm/security system). Reserves are regularly being spent and depleted. These need replenishing regularly as more ongoing 'big' maintenance / expenditure is required at Martys Marsh, the churchyard, the courthouse etc.

#### Position year to date at 31<sup>st</sup> November 2019:

Year to date the council has spent £31,745.15 of precept funds of £67,270. The council has reviewed the current financial position and the financial commitments anticipated both for 2020/21 and looking beyond needs to continue bolstering its reserves which are regularly being depleted.

#### 1. BUDGET DETAIL

- 1.1. Minor changes – small changes in individual budgeted items, (see attached appendix A), some small increases have been made, including an annual salary pay rise to the clerks.
- 1.2. The parish council continues to put £5,000 on one side per annum for a parish partnership scheme as this is excellent value for the parish. If successful 50% of the funding costs are paid for by NCC. Improvements to the parish under this scheme so far have been the two Speed signs and the Doctors Surgery Bus shelter. In addition, the Woodbastwick Road Trod, village signs and a new bus shelter on Mill Road will all be delivered in 2019/20.
- 1.3. The working party recommend increasing the CAN membership to Silver, an increase from £20 to £50 per annum. They offer community profiling services and support with big projects which will be very helpful.

#### 2. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FOR HEATHLANDS AND MARGARET HARKER HALL

- 2.1. The finance working party suggest keeping these contributions the same as 2019/20.
  - 2.1.1. **Heathlands** - The Council paid £1,500 for 2018/19 towards Heathlands Ground Maintenance and £2,500 for 2019/20 towards the ground maintenance. The working party recommend maintaining this at £2,500 for 2020/21. Therefore, the council will be paying the cost of the grass/hedge cutting and £1,000 towards tree works.
  - 2.1.2. **Margaret Harker Hall** - The Council paid £3,600 for 2018/19 towards the Margaret Harker Hall Grounds Maintenance and £3,600 for 2019/20. The working party recommends maintaining this at £3,600 for 2020/21. This is for the cost of grass cutting and £1,000 towards tree works. The council has paid to £3,000 towards the cost of tree works over the last 3 years.

#### 3. RESERVES DETAIL

- 3.1. The working party recommend the council continue to allocate reserves to 5 key headings, as significant works are planned / scheduled in all these areas:
  - 3.1.1. **General Reserves** £2,500 - to bolster to half a year of running costs.
  - 3.1.2. **Courthouse Reserves** £2,000 (in addition - £21,540.48 carried over from 2018/19) - painting, window works, scaffolding circa £8,500 scheduled for summer 2020. Disabled ramp improvements under consideration and possible visual audio equipment improvements.

- 3.1.3. **Churchyard Reserves** £4,000 – work to churchyard wall and trees required following recent surveys.
  - 3.1.4. **Martys Marsh Reserves** £5,000 – set up costs over the next two years of at least £15,000 are required. In addition, £3,000 reserves were budgeted in 201920.
  - 3.1.5. **Big Project Reserves** £9,000 – to build up a reserve in addition to the CIL fund and grants for a large community project.
4. The council working party have reviewed the current CIL funds position, showing income and expenditure to date. The council currently holds £332,856.91 of unspent CIL funds (see Appendix B). All CIL funds and associated interest is held at the BDC deposit scheme. Work continues on developing a large, once in a lifetime community project which will be partially funded by these CIL funds. A small reserve fund has been budgeted for 202021 to aid fund raising for the community project.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

1. Taking into account all the detail above the finance working party recommend that the Council approve the budget detailed in the attached document.
2. The council increase the CAN membership to the Silver band (£50).
3. The finance working party have reviewed the budget and recommend setting the Parish Precept at £85,000 202021. This is an increase of £17,250. An estimated total cost of £57.86 per year or £4.82 per month per band D house in the Parish. Whilst initially this seems a large figure the clear budget detail above explains the reasons for this recommendation. In addition, the council may find it useful to note that the Band D charge per year for 201920 for local parishes is as follows:  
Brundall - £59.79, Acle – £116.75, Rackheath – £60.96.
4. The working party propose the allotment rent remains at £50 per year per full plot. However, it is important to make the council aware that the small amount of reserves held for the allotments are gradually being used due to ongoing maintenance / pest control.
5. The working party reviewed the reserves as stated at 31/3/2019 and did not feel any realignment was currently necessary.

Prepared by Sarah Osbaldeston  
3 December 2019