

Blofield Parish Council

Finance Budget Setting Final Report – December 2023

- a) Reserves Balance sheet and
- b) Budget Setting document

1. RESERVES POSITIONS at November 2023:

Churchyard reserves - The council has ample reserves for the churchyard currently at £28,685.10. Some of this could be transferred to the courthouse if required. Plans are still in place to look at the churchyard wall repairs which it is estimated will be in the region of £20,000. Some church gravestones still require repair and a tree survey with possible works is required.

Courthouse reserves - Significant reserves continue to be spent at the Courthouse in 2022/23 on repointing, window repairs, cell bar/brick repairs. And in 2023/24 on the Cupula and down pipes. However due to significant grants the council still holds £15,965.52 in reserves for the courthouse.

Marty's Marsh Reserves – Are currently held at £22,686.06. This is due to significant grants for the culvert repairs and new footpath covering all the cost of the works totalling - £24,203.09. Some of this could be transferred to the Future Capital Projects Reserve if required.

The footbridge is still progressing and subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment before the building commences in Summer 2024. All being well, funding for this whole project has been secured too from Green Infrastructure funds and funding from County Councillor Andrew Proctor.

Future Capital projects reserves - The council are progressing with the land transfer of the 'old school site', preparation for a new play area (with a national highways designated funds grant) to be installed in Summer 2024 and the associated planning permissions required. This requires significant funds. Already £12,159 has been spent predominantly on legal costs. £8,422.41 remains in this reserve.

A feasibility study has taken place with a grant from BDC and the outcome of this will help determine how to spend of the CIL funds.

It is anticipated that further significant funds will be required when the land transfer of the 'old school' site takes place. This includes £10,000 for the moving of the utilities and £10,000 fencing between sites, these costs will be split with NCC. Legal conveyancing costs of circa £2,000.

Playground equipment reserve – this holds a grant (£532.99) received from BDC our district councillor Paul Newstead for a bench on the 'old school site' when it is transferred to the parish council.

2. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The council provides a *contribution* to grounds maintenance for both the MHH site and Heathlands site. This is historical and in lieu of the council not owning any community land. The council land ownership has changed over the last couple of years and likely to change in the future too as the council now owns Marty's Marsh and Wyngates Areas 1&2 and will be coming into receipt Wyngates Area 3 and the old school site.

The working group discussed these contributions and requested detail of the expected budget for grounds maintenance for the two sites as usual. Costs continue to rise for all parties however the council continues to strive to avoid large increases in the parish precept. The council agreed to keep the total budget at £6100.

3. ALLOTMENTS ANNUAL RENT

Maintain the allotments annual rental at £50 for the cost of a full plot per annum.

4. PRECEPT

The working party propose setting the precept for 2024/25 at £105,000 an increase of £5,300 however as the number of band D properties has increased in the parish from 1607 to 1648 the resulting estimated total cost of £63.71 per year or £5.31 per month, an increase of £1.67 per annum for each band D house in the Parish. This is a small increase of 2.7% to each household.

Table of approximate figures of precept changes.....

Year	House numbers	House numbers	Precept	Cost per house	Cost per month	% Increase on previous year
2021/22			£94,000	£63.71	£5.31	2.7%
2022/23	1514	1571	£97,500	£62.06	£5.17	
2023/24	1571	1607	£99,700	£62.04	£5.17	0
2024/25	1607	1648	£105,000	£63.71	£5.31	2.7%
2025/26						

Sarah Osbaldeston

Parish Clerk
13 December 2023