

## Budget and Precept – Questions & Answers

In response to the formal consultation process the observations of several parishioners have been received. These have been summarised below together with the Finance Working Groups suggested responses for full council consideration.

1. **£1500 is in the budget for cutting the grass at Crumpton Hill. However, last year it only cost £120 for a single cut. Links were also provided which showed that for environmental purposes there is some recommendations for grass being cut twice a year.**

The £1500 was suggested by the recreation WG, the grass cutting was allocated in another part of the budget. The £1500 specifically for CHVG is for ditching work. The grass cutting tender had already been sent prior to these comments. However, the comments regarding cutting the grass twice per year will be sent to the recreation and environment WG for consideration prior to 2020-21 budget preparation.

2. **Why is there a sudden drop by 66% in CSPC proposed reserves?**

CSPC feel that as their income is guaranteed by way of a precept, it is not necessary to hold 12 months reserves. It was also balanced with the precept increase and what is reasonable, it was felt that to have reserves of 12 months this would increase the proposed precept by a further £40,000.

3. **The budget increase is based on an increase in hours worked by the clerk from 12 to 14 hours per week, should this be included prior to approval from full council?**

The increases suggested are mainly contractual, i.e. successful completion of probation and CiLCA qualification. However, the clerk has informed the employment WG that she does not wish to increase her hours from 12 to 14 per week so this will be removed from the budget.

4. **Does the budget include payment for overtime by the clerk?**

As this is the budget for 2019-20 overtime is not included as it is not anticipated that the clerk will work overtime.

5. **Would £500 p/a be more realistic for small donations?**

Suggestion to reduce this to £500 p/a.

6. **Why is a by-election being budgeted for as they only incur a cost if contested?**

The recommendation by HALC is to budget for one by-election per year.

7. **What is the £3000 for a specialist for recreation equipment for, is it based on quotes?**

Claire Jones to look at further.

**8. Why are CSPC paying £300 for dog bin emptying?**

A quote has been received at £145 p/m + VAT, based on emptying 4 dog bins once a fortnight. Other companies have provided expected costs but they are around £75 per month for a single collection from a central place – they will not empty the bins. It is for council to consider whether to pay the cost of emptying the dog bins or try and continue with a volunteer system.

**9. Why has £1000 been allocated for hedge cutting?**

Claire Jones to look at further.

**10. What is the £1000 for painting Chapel Lane play equipment based on?**

Claire Jones to see if lengthsman could complete this. So the cost would be reduced to materials only.

**11. CSPC need to reappraise the role of the lengthsman and time given for this work.**

Suggest keep the same for now and monitor.

**12. All capital projects should be fully costed.**

The £1500 will be removed from capital to recreation maintenance. CSPC cannot afford the mini football-pitch this year -further public consultation also required.

**13. Why has the contingency increased to £6000?**

This relates to possible costs of £3500 for re-gilding the clock and £1500 for a SID as suggested to improve road safety. Miscellaneous contingency would therefore be £1000.

**14. Was any P3 grant claimed for 2018-19?**

The deadline for claiming P3 grant is 31<sup>st</sup> March, the clerk will include all PROW work and send in March 2019 to claim.

**15. What is included in publication costs? Why are The Reporter and postage not shown?**

Publication costs are for material for the clerk. The Reporter and postage are shown in the communication WG budget section.

**16. Should VAT be shown as it is reclaimable?**

Although VAT is reclaimed it should be shown as an expenditure and receipt, for transparency.