

Blofield Parish Council

MEETING TO REVIEW EXPENDITURE TO DATE FOR 2017/18 AND SET A BUDGET FOR 2018/19 – Appendix 4

Meeting - 22nd November, 10:00am -12:30pm

Present –Nigel MacPherson, Rob Christie, Paul Baverstock, Sarah Osbaldeston,
Melanie Eversfield

NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CLERK HOURS INCREASE

- 1.1. It was noted that due to the previously agreed increase in clerk hours from 15th November 2017 the council will overspend on salaries by approximately £,3800 in 2017/18. The budget has been significantly increased in this area for 2018/19 to cover the costs of 30 clerk hours (previously 16). The budget for 201819 for employees is £23,145.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- 2.1. A small increase is recommended due to running two home offices.

3. COUNCIL COSTS

- 3.1. The budget for 201819 allows for a refresher councilor training session.

4. BUS SHELTER CLEANING

- 4.1. The working group proposed an increase of £10 to £110 (biannually) to the bus shelter cleaning volunteers. This money is provided to cover the costs of their cleaning equipment.

5. RESERVES FOR COURTHOUSE

- 5.1. The Council currently holds £22,837.75 in reserves for the Courthouse at 31/03/17. In addition, there is approximately £2,000 in the budget for the remainder of 2017/18. The working party therefore do not recommend putting any additional funds into reserve for the Courthouse for 201819.
- 5.2. It is anticipated that the Council will continue adding to reserves again for the Courthouse from 201920.

6. CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

- 6.1. The Council has spent significant funds on the churchyard wall during 201718. The Council has spent its full reserves held for the churchyard at 31/3/17 of £11,905.29. In addition, they have spent £4193.40 on the wall repairs and £1,288 on hedge cutting from this year's £5,500 budget. There is an additional circa £1,500 to pay for grass cutting for 201718.
- 6.2. The working party recommend that any additional churchyard works (tree works / gate replacement / footpath repairs) for the remainder of 201718 and 201819 are considered as projects under the new 'project process' and funding will come from the general reserves.
- 6.3. It is anticipated that the Council will start building up reserves again for the Churchyard from 201920.

7. PARISH UPKEEP

- 7.1. Funds of £4,150 has been proposed for 201819. £3,150 for replacing street signs with additional naming reasons. £1,000 for adhoc items including other grounds maintenance work.

8. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE BUDGET FOR HEATHLANDS

- 8.1. The Council paid £1,454 for 201718 towards Heathlands Grounds Maintenance. The working party recommend increasing this to £1,500 for 201819.

9. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE BUDGET FOR MHH

- 9.1. The Council paid £3,450 for 201718 towards the Margaret Harker Hall Grounds Maintenance. The working party recommend increasing this to £3,600 for 201819. The grounds cutting Norse contract for 201819 will be £2,600 and there are significant tree/hedging works required.

10. ALLOTMENTS

- 10.1. The Council has funded 6 pest control visits to the allotments for 201718. The working party recommend the council budget for up to 10 visits for 201819 as required (totalling £750). The Allotments rental brings approximately £1,500 to the Council £800 is spent on the land rental and the additional funds are budgeted for the pest control.

11. SURPLUS FUNDS

- 11.1. Within the budget there is little flexibility. A small budget of £1,000 has been proposed for small projects and a contingency remains of £2,000. All other figures are budgeted accurately and are expected to be required.

12. PROJECTS

Any projects will need to be assessed through the project process agreed by the Council in October 2016. Expenditure will also need to be approved prior to commencement of a project. These can be sourced from:

- Future Capital Project Reserves of £34,1554.15 at 31/03/17
- Section 106 funds held by BDC
- Community Infrastructure Levy Funds of £204,778.15 at 30/11/17
- Applying for Community grants

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROVAL:

13. Taking into account all the detail above the finance working party recommend that the Council approve the budget detailed in the attached document.
14. The finance working party have reviewed the budget and recommend setting the Parish Precept at £48,500 for 201819. This is an increase of £5,500. In real terms this represents an increase of 12.03%. An estimated increase of £3.02 per year per band D house in the Parish.

Prepared by Sarah Osbaldeston
Parish Clerk