

BROMESWELL PARISH COUNCIL

BUDGET FOR 2022-23

Prepared by Rob Cutts, Parish Clerk (31 January 2022)

Following discussion of the various options and known expenditure at the PC meeting on the 17 January 2022, a precept request of £5363.00 was submitted to ESC for the 2022-23 financial year. The 2021/22 precept was £4897.

Established revenue spending

	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2021-22</u>
Clerks costs (1)	£3200	£2200
PC Insurance Premium (2)	£ 200	£ 187
Audit Fee (3)	£ 200	£ 190
Information Cmsnr Fee	£ 35	£ 35
Donations (PCC, CAB, DAS) (4)	£ 750	£ 620
Website hosting	£ 60	£ 60
SALC Membership	£ 200	£ 190
VHC Room Hire (5)	£ 78	NIL
Councillor training	£ 140	£ 140
Queens Jubilee celebrations	<u>£ 500</u>	NIL
Total planned & expected revenue spend (6)	£5363	£3622

Notes

1. This covers agreed gross annual salary for Clerk of £2500, any PAYE payable to HMRC, any pension contributions required by the Clerk, allowances for the Clerk to attend training and networking events to support them and an additional one off amount for this year to assist in paying for any additional hours involved in taking over the role.
2. The current 3 year fixed price arrangement through Community Action Suffolk ends in September 2022. It is therefore likely that there will be some increase from 2021-22.
3. Audit arrangements have been put in place again with SALC for the internal audit of the 2021-22 accounts. This assumes there is no need for an external audit and again assumes a small increase in their charges from 2021.
4. The PC has consistently made donations to the PCC for upkeep of the churchyard, the local Citizens Advice Bureau and the Disability Advice Centre. Both the CAB & DAS have been helpful to Bromeswell residents in the past. The budget figure of £620 for 2021-22 was an error as it only budgeted for the payment to the PCC (which the PC has agreed should increase by inflation each year).

5. There was no figure in last years budget for hall hire for meetings as at the time it was set lockdown rules meant face to face meetings were unlikely. The budget for 2022-23 is based on current charges for 6 meetings.
6. At the meeting on 17 January 2022 the PC took the decision to limit its precept request for 2022-23 to only the amount of revenue expenditure it was intending to spend and to make no further additions to reserves for the coming year due to the known cost of implications of the worldwide pandemic on cost of living for residents. The Clerk/RFO asked the PC to consider revisiting increasing reserves again in coming years as there will undoubtedly need to be contributions to the VHC, highways/drainage expenditure and replacement/repair of capital items such as the clerk's laptop and vehicle activated sign in future years.

Reserves

At the time of preparing the budget it was expected that the Reserves would remain at £9700 for 2022-23. Currently reserves are held for the following:

Village Hall – £2000

This is often referred to as the key village community asset. It is owned by the PC but let on a long lease to the VHC who are responsible for upkeep. Much of the work planned by the VHC relies upon grants and a key indicator for successful grant applications is often the community input. Funds put aside by the PC can be useful in obtaining these grants. This reserve has been increased and not used over recent years.

Contested Election Reserve – £1250

The PC came close a couple of years ago to needing to hold an election for a councillor vacancy outside the usual cycle of elections. The costs for holding such an election are high and have to be paid by the PC. Having funds available to meet such costs is a sensible precaution in my view.

Technology Replacement – £1200

The cost of replacing the VAS would be around £3000 and the laptop around £350. I would suggest it prudent to keep increasing this fund by £300 a year until this sum is held in reserves. It can also be used to meet maintenance costs for these items.

Legal Action Reserve – £1250

Primarily this relates to possible needs to seek legal planning advice. In the past this has been needed. The last bill was part funded by the PC and part by local residents and came to £12,000. This reserve would buy you at best 2 hours of advice on a planning issue from a local planning solicitor.

Highways, footpaths, drainage & road safety Reserve – £2700

This is money earmarked for use to improve speed signage on Sutton Road, possible VAS post on Common Lane and to cover ongoing drainage maintenance.

General Contingency Reserve – £1300

This covers the things I have forgotten or that just crop up (eg. New village hall lease, village hall fence, village sign, notice board replacement). Often these things can be covered from other reserves or from

generous contributions from our District & County Councillors or residents, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Precept Request

The 2022-23 Precept request of £5363 was calculated as follows:

Total planned spending	£ 5363.00
+ planned reserves	<u>£ 9700.00</u>
	£15063.00
Less, current projected year end reserves	<u>£ 9700.00</u>
2022-23 Precept Request	<u>£ 5363.00</u>

This represents an average precept of £41.25 per house in the village, or less than £1 per week for running the PC and the funding the projects identified as priorities within the Parish Plan and other local maintenance expenditure.

Rob Cutts
Parish Clerk