

Mrs L. A. Ruff
Clerk of the Council
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27th October, 2022

PLEASE NOTE DATE TIME VENUE

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee which will be held in Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street on **TUESDAY, 1st NOVEMBER, 2022** for the purpose of transacting the business specified in the following agenda. The meeting will commence at **6 p.m.** The Chair will explain the procedures for the meeting. The public and press are invited to attend.

Yours faithfully,

L.A. Ruff Clerk of the Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - acceptance of any reasons offered
2. MINUTES
To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6th September, 2022 (copy attached). **Pages 3 - 6**
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS
4. GRANT – GREENBANK POOL 2023/24
To consider the grant application (attached). **Page**
5. ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE AND PRECEPT FOR 2023/24
(report attached including confidential section for members only) **Pages**
6. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS – JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022
(confidential report sent to members only and other details attached) **Pages 9 - 10**
7. PERIODIC REPORTS AND INSPECTIONS (attached) **Page 13**

To: Councillors: P. Birch, S. Carswell, P. Goater, N.Kellett, T.W.E. Napper, H. Shearer, and L.Wolfers

STREET PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held in Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Street, on 6 September 2022 at 6pm

PRESENT: Councillor S. Carswell (Vice-Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillors: H. Shearer, N. Smith and L. Wolfers

IN ATTENDANCE: L.A. Ruff – Clerk/RFO
Z. Leach– Deputy Clerk and RFO
D. Price – Assistant Clerk Community Engagement
A representative of Street Bowling Club
A representative of Strode College Sports Centre

APOLOGIES: Councillors: P. Birch, P.Goater, N.Kellett, T.Napper – reasons accepted.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 July, 2022 which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct the following declarations of interest were made:

Councillors Carswell and Shearer declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to the District Council and stated they would keep an open mind when considering issues at either District or Parish level.

Councillors Carswell and Shearer declared an other interest under Appendix B in any matters relating to the County Council and stated that they would keep an open mind when considering issues at either County or Parish level.

Councillor Wolfers declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Street and Glastonbury Chamber of Commerce as she worked freelance for them.

Councillor Shearer declared an other interest under Appendix B in the grant application for Houndwood Community Group as she was a member of the Group.

Councillor Carswell is a representative of the Council on the Street Twinning Association and did not leave the meeting as he only observes.

Councillor Wolfers is a representative of the Council on the Crispin Hall group and did not leave the meeting as she only observes.

11. GRANT APPLICATIONS 2022/23 and 2023/24

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated.

A representative of Street Bowling Club and Strode College Sports Centre made presentations to the Committee in support of their grant applications and then left the meeting at 6.45pm.

The Clerk advised that we are awaiting receipt of the YMCA grant application.

RESOLVED

A. that the following grants be made for 2022/23 -

Street Bowling Club	£1,000
Street & Walton Men's Shed	£1,000
St Margaret's Somerset Hospice	£1,500
Glastonbury FM	£1,100 (subject to conditions below)
Street Neighbourhood Watch	£ 300
Glastonbury & Street Sea Cadets	£1,000
Street Parochial Church Council	£1,300
Wessex Youth Football	£1,000 (subject to conditions below)
Moorlight Theatre	£1,000
Street & Glastonbury Carers Group -	£ 216 (subject to conditions below)
Council will pay room hire charges in the community centre (Total including grants already paid = £10,616 with £15,384 left)	

B. that Somerset and Wessex Eating Disorder Association are informed that they will be invited to bid for funding for mental health initiatives in Street in 2023/24.

C. that the grant application for the Houndwood Community Group be deferred to the Council meeting as due to Councillor Shearer having an interest the meeting was not quorate.

D. that Glastonbury FM are asked to confirm that they will organise community training and continue to be involved in events in Street.

E. that the Street Parochial Church Council are asked to provide any PR communications for circulation on the Council's media platforms.

G. that Wessex Youth Football as asked to clarify how many members are from Street and whether they are in receipt of any funding from Walton Parish Council

H. that Street Twinning Association be allowed free use of a meeting room at the Parish Rooms and a letter be sent to them confirming the value of this provision.

I. that Street & Glastonbury Carers Group are asked to give a future presentation to the Council and are encouraged to promote their services to the community of Street and provide advice on how to join the group.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the following grants be made in:

2022/23:

Strode College Sports Centre £2,500 (subject to conditions below)

2023/24:

Citizens Advice Mendip £10,000 agreed and a presentation to be made to the Council.

Crispin Community Focus £10,000

A. that the grant application from Elmhurst School Association be declined as the Council is constrained by budget and feels that other causes are better suited.

B. that Strode College Sports Centre confirm to the Council that the bursary provision will be ringfenced specifically for children within the community of Street that are in receipt of free school meals and that they agree to report back to the Council next year.

C. that the Principal of Strode College and Manager of Strode Theatre are asked to make a presentation to the Council on their grant application for £20k.

D. In respect of the previous application from Strode College for PFSA funding it was agreed to inform them that bids will be invited in 2023 for youth outreach and mental health services provision.

E. to arrange a meeting with Crispin school and the committee to discuss assistance and the new bid scheme.

12. RELOCATION OF SCOUTS TO STREET FOOTBALL CLUB SITE

Councillor Shearer provided a brief update on the situation regarding the potential relocation of the scouts to the Street Football Club site.

RESOLVED

To ask Millfield School and the Redbrick Building if they had a suitable vacant building which the scouts could move to.

13. INCOME GENERATION

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated which clarified the position on 'trading'. Trade could only be done through a commercial company which could be owned by the Council but would be subject to corporation tax and other taxes.

The main source of income for the Council is the precept. The Council has successfully delivered projects in the past using section 106 funding and from grants, this can be continued for new initiatives.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk/RFO
Subject: Grant Application - Greenbank Pool 2023/24

An application has been received from the Pool Trust for a grant next year of £30,000 and details have been circulated to members. This sum is already included in the precept report in Item No. 5. The conditions attached to the grant of £30,000 agreed for 2022/23 are set out below -

that a grant of £30,000 be made in 2022/23 to Greenbank Pool Charitable Incorporated Organisation subject to the following conditions -

Communication – that separate press releases be issued from the Council and Trustees after the full Council meeting on 15th February giving the opening date and hours (the Council’s release to state that it had given support to the Pool through grants totalling £80,000 over the 3 years from 2020/21)

Payment of Grant – 3 payments of £10,000 with the first when the Pool is fully open to the public on the Saturday of the first May Bank Holiday weekend, the second on 13th July and the third when the season was completed on the second Saturday in September although the end of September would be preferred – the Trustees could explain why dates may change but the Council would reserve the right not to pay

Opening Dates and Times – the Pool to be fully open to the public by the early May Bank Holiday weekend at the latest and remain open to at least the second Saturday In September. Opening hours to remain as previous years (pre Covid) and to add 2 early morning sessions for lane swimming. All regular opening hours to remain family swimming (not lanes).

Tickets – season tickets to be offered as in 2019 with a greater reduction in the price of family season tickets for Street residents using the additional funding from the Council. To consider another season ticket at a higher price to include early morning sessions. Cash to remain a payment option at the turnstile and shop.

Future Developments – the Trustees of the CIO to support the formation of a Friends of Greenbank Pool with T. Rice as Chair, offering a voice for the users of the Pool, to encourage more volunteering and to develop fundraising opportunities. The Trustees to work with the Council and the Friends on sustainability plans for 2023 onwards.

Management and Governance – to revisit the name of the Management Committee reflecting that it is an advisory committee and agree terms of reference

L.A. Ruff
Clerk/RFO
01.11.22

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Estimated Expenditure and Precept for 2023/2024

1. 2022/2023

The Council's precept for the current year is £580,000 (£471,500 in 2021/2022). The balance carried forward from 2021/2022 was £333,235 compared with a balance of £292,333 the previous year. The estimated balance at the end of the current financial year is £425,339.

2. 2023/2024

The Council Tax base for this Parish for 2022/2023 was equivalent to 3794.31 band D properties. A precept of £3,794.31 would equal a parish tax of £1 per band D property. The Council Tax base for 2023/2024 will be notified by Mendip District Council in mid December. Inflation is around 10% so this figure has been used for most allocations and therefore the Parish Council's target figure for the precept would be £638,000.

A general inflation figure of 10% was agreed by the Committee on 6th September but I have not increased the allocations for the following to keep spending under control -

- £100,000 Council Reform
- £ 55,000 Issues for Street
- £ 30,000 Contingency Fund
- £ 25,000 General Grants
- £ 3,000 Maintenance of Parish Rooms

The proposed budget for 2023/2024 is set out in Annex A to this report for consideration – see separate attachment including confidential staff details. The estimated precept required, as detailed in the Appendix of £638,000 would give an estimated tax of £168.15 on a Band D property (an increase of £15.29 from this year or £1.27 a month or 10% - £152.86 in 2022/23). This would balance income with expenditure. The Government will not cap local council precepts for 2023/24 but it is advisable to consult the community regularly on the activities of the Council and the level of council tax. Some other examples are set out below for consideration -

£610,000 estimated £160.77 on Band D + £7.91 or £0.66 a mth or 5.2%

NOTE - with this option expenditure would exceed income by £29,100 which would come from reserves

£650,000 estimated £171.31 on Band D + £18.45 or £1.54 a mth or 12%

£680,000 estimated £179.22 on Band D + £26.36 or £2.20 a mth or 17.2%

£700,000 estimated £184.49 on Band D + £31.63 or £2.64 a mth or 20.5%

If the precept requirement of the parish is greater than £100,000 the Council is required to provide details of the planned expenditure for the year as this information will be published on the District Council's website/council tax leaflet. Suggested details are attached as Annex B for consideration and recommendation to Council.

L.A. Ruff
 Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
 01.11.22

COUNCIL TAX - STREET PARISH COUNCIL

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Change %
Gross Expenditure	607,008 (budget) 509,182 (actual est.)	660,000 660,000	+ 8.7 + 29.5
Less Income	21,286	20,900	- 1.8

Transfer Reserves	+ 92,104	- 1,100	-
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NOTE - If £100,000 for Council Reform is not spent in 2023/24 and is transferred to reserves as in 2022/23 there would be very little change

Council Tax Requirement	580,000	638,000	+ 10
Tax Base	3794.31	Notified in mid Dec.	-
Basic Council Tax Band D	152.86	168.15	+ 10

STREET PARISH COUNCIL
PRECEPT CALCULATION 2023/2024

Bank Balances 1st April, 2022	333,235	
Add Receipts to 31st March, 2023 probable	601,286	
	934,521	
Less Payments to 31st March, 2023 probable	509,182	
Balances (probable) at 31st March, 2023	425,339	
2023 to 2024		
Budgeted Income (excl. Precept) -		
Bank Interest	2,300	Estimate
Strode Road Allotments - rent	300	
Hire of meeting rooms at Parish Rooms	300	
Library Income	3,000	
Somerset County Council – supply Library services	15,000	
	20,900	
	446,239	
Less Budgeted Payments	660,000	Estimate
	- 213,761	
Less Balances required at 31st March, 2024 -		
Relocate Scout Hut	23,000	
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	4,890	
Parish Rooms – 5 year exterior paintwork	5,000	
Replacement Fund for Skate Park	10,000	
Sensory Garden Merriman Park	5,000	
S106 Bike Racks Merriman Park	3,753	
Community Support/New Services (Unitary Changes)	190,000	
General Revenue Reserves	182,596	
Total	424,239	
	- £638,000	
PRECEPT REQUIRED FOR 2023/2024	£638,000	

NOTES TO APPENDIX A

EXPENDITURE

ADMINISTRATION

STAFFING

GENERAL

TELEPHONE/BROADBAND

Around £1,585 overspend in 2022/23. The cost of the office mobile used to take photos at events for social media etc. reduced from August 2020 by about £40 a month. A new BT phone line was required to the lift for use in an emergency at a cost of around £150 a year. A new cheaper deal with BT started in August 2021 for calls and broadband.

INSURANCE

The annual cost will rise if new assets are acquired and added to cover. There was an increase of around £600 a year from October 2020 due to an increased number of play equipment items in the new play area at Merriman Park – public liability only.

SALC/SLCC/SWC/PONLINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

For the current year subscriptions were -

South West Councils	£ 465
Zoom	£ 120
Somerset Association of Local Councils	£1,513
Society of Local Council Clerks	£ 330 estimate
Parish Online mapping service	£ 230 estimate
Canva Premium	£ 100
Good Councillors Guide	£ 77

AUDIT

£1,300 for external audit of Annual Governance and Accountability Return and £625 for internal audit.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

Notice in the local newspaper relating to grant applications	£129
Notice in paper for Annual Parish Meeting in March 2023	£150 est.

ROOM HIRE Overspend of around £630

Room 6 of the Community Centre is used for Council and Committee meetings. Working Group and informal meetings tend to be held at the Parish Rooms.

COMPUTER AID/RBS/DATA PROTECTION Overspend around £463

16 member and 3 staff Office 365 emails with advanced protection cost £128 per month + £50 for back up. 1 year anti virus protection for all PCs and laptops £366. Support and maintenance of the website totals around £300. Support and year end closedown for the accounting system totals around £800 and the data processing fee is £35.

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTANCE

This includes mileage claimed by staff and members attending conferences etc.

TRAINING – STAFF/MEMBERS Overspend around £2,337

Around £2,000 for Deputy Clerk/RFO and Assistant Clerk to do CiLCA course. £337.50 paid towards cost of 2 new staff doing First Aid course in September. £200 for Deputy Clerk doing accounts training with Rialtas. Around £800 for councillor training.

ELECTIONS

There was no specific allocation for the elections held in May 2022 and as usual none of the 3 wards were contested and the costs only amounted to £400 – taken from the Contingency Fund. Unless a bye election is called there will be no cost until May 2027 when the next elections will be held.

CHAIR'S ALLOWANCE

Estimated spend of £671 with £79 left.

£95 for bouquet and gift on retirement of Assistant Clerk, £26 refreshments during recruitment, £350 10 eco wreaths, £200 assumed for bouquets/gifts/event tickets. **The Chair would like to give any funds left to a local charity at the end of the year + £200 not spent in 2021/22. It is therefore suggested that agreement be given to give a grant of £300 to a selected local charity in March 2023.**

FURNITURE/EQUIPMENT/IMPROVEMENTS £1,393 underspend
£607 - £157 on audio meeting recorder and door wedges, £450 estimate for PA system.

SPC BUILDING

RATES

There was a rebate of £869 from 2019/20 and £2,742 in 2020/21 due to the building being empty while the works were carried out. This was used towards the additional costs of altering the Parish Rooms. There was no change in rates with the Library operating in the Parish Rooms but the description needed to be changed with the Valuation Office and this has been done.

ELECTRIC/GAS

The energy supplier for the building changed from December 2020 from Eon to Opus and a saving of around £200 a year prior to recent price increases. To date charges seem very reasonable but I have assumed that from now on they could increase considerably resulting in an overspend of around £2,200.

JANITORIAL Overspend £4,503 approx.

From 2021/22 cleaning costs increased due to Covid and the need to clean the ground floor more frequently. The ground floor cleaning has now been reduced to one day a week.

MAINTENANCE/RENOVATIONS – PARISH ROOMS

The allocation of £3,000 includes 6 monthly checks of the security and fire alarm and of the lift from May 2021, boiler servicing, annual clearing out guttering and minor repairs, servicing of fire extinguishers £150 and unblocking drains several times a year £450. £380 will be needed in 2024 for next 3 year independent fire risk assessment.

PWLB LOANS

Loan 1 will be repaid on 13th November 2023. This was a fixed annuity loan at 3.56%.

Therefore the allocation of £22,222 in 2023/24 will be the last.

Loan 2 for £100,000 towards the cost of altering the Parish Rooms commenced from 24th July 2020 with the first payment due on 25th January 2021. The last payment will be made on 24th January 2035. This was also a fixed annuity loan at 2.01% for 14 years and 6 months.

CONTINGENCY FUND

£30,000 allocation for 2022/23.

Agency worker 22 Mar to 17 June 22	£	1,681	
Ukrainian and Union Jack flags	£	75	
Install new bench Marshalls Elm	£	214	
Climate Conference	£	13	
Miscellaneous incl. Bankline fee, drinks, cards	£	400	est.
TOTAL	£	2,383	

ADD the following overspends -

Uncontested elections May 2022 – no allocation	£	400	
Building – heat and light	£	2,200	
Janitorial	£	4,503	
Staffing – new Deputy Clerk and Asst. Clerk	£	31,582	
Skate Park maintenance	£	1,945	
Telephone/broadband	£	1,585	
Greenbank Pool grant	£	2,000	
Room hire	£	630	
Computer aid etc.	£	463	
Training staff and councillors	£	2,337	
TOTAL	£	47,645	

TOTAL £ 50,028

LESS the following underspends -

Furniture/equipment/improvements	£	1,393	
Legal/professional building	£	400	
General grants	£	11,884	
Highways	£	500	
Civic event and awards	£	550	
Christmas	£	2,794	
Remembrance/other	£	1,850	
Community safety	£	1,000	
High Street enhancement	£	375	
Dog and litter bins	£	2,000	
CCTV monitoring	£	9,665	
TOTAL	£	32,411	

£17,617 spent and £12,383 left.

GRANTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

GENERAL GRANTS

£13,116 agreed to date. Underspend of £11,884.

OTHER GRANTS

TWINNING ASSOCIATION - no grant needed for 2023/24 as free use of the Parish Rooms to be given for meetings.

LIBRARY - £35,350 estimated in 2022/23 for staff costs in accordance with the CLP agreement less agreed grant from the County Council for supply of library services of £15,000 and estimated income of £3,150 = £17,200. It has been assumed that the CLP agreement will carry on after the break clause of 31st March 2023. There is provision for a change of premises if 9 months notice is given. It was agreed to start negotiations when work is due to commence on the 1924 building.

MENDIP YMCA

It was agreed that from 2022/23 the grant of £10,000 be added to the annual Other Grants.

GREENBANK SWIMMING POOL

£30,000 agreed in 2022/23 provided the Pool opened and closed as specified. The Pool opened a few weeks late and therefore £20,000 was paid in grants. The Pool Trust will submit their grant request for 2023/24 in time for it to be considered at this meeting.

LIBRARY GARDEN MAINTENANCE

£750 spent - £600 for protective coating on new murals and £150 for microphone and music during Mural Reveal. Grant from a local trust of £1,000 met these costs and there is £250 left towards further improvements to the 2 pavilions in due course. Also Melhuish and Saunders Ltd. did not charge for the fixing of the murals so that the charge of £750 could be used towards the works on the pavilions. £4,000 was paid in 2021/22 to the artist for producing the murals and this was funded through a Creative Mendip grant.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

£1,000 unspent. The Council has a duty to consider the prevention of crime and disorder in all that it does under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 extended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Policing and Crime Act 2009. This funding has been used in the past for grants given for this purpose such as the Somerset Motor Project.

COMMUNITY

CCTV MONITORING

It has been assumed that £9,665 allocated for 2022/23 will not be paid to Mendip District Council. There was no charge last year, there is no current agreement in place and the District Council will cease to exist from 1st April 2023. Monitoring was not carried out for some time due to staff shortage etc. The future of the service will be reviewed by the New Somerset Council with the Police in liaison with the town councils when time can be found for this.

HIGH STREET ENHANCEMENT

Underspend of around £375. Costs of 3 year contract with SLH are included - watering and maintenance of hanging baskets and planters £10,250, supply, hanging and removing baskets and planting planters Spring, Summer and Winter £3,000, removing banners £400, electric for clock £144, cleaning bus shelters quarterly £1,150, graffiti removal £200, cleaning bin in High Street £192.

LITTER AND DOG BINS

No new bins needed in 2022/23.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

£4,890 in Earmarked Reserves as the remaining grant from Groundworks UK which should be repaid if not spent as detailed in the application bid. At present the Council has decided to focus on a number of other priorities.

HIGHWAYS Around £500 underspend

New bike racks were provided at Greenbank Pool in 2020/21 from £10,000 Section 106 funding received in 2019/20. £1,555 of this was spent in 2019/20 on refurbishing the bus shelters by the Crispin Hall and £3,753 remaining will be used to provide extra bike racks in Merriman Park or another location.

From 2022/23 under the new contract with SLH Services £1,350 will be spent on moving and charging the speed indicator devices and maintaining the roundabout. £650 estimated for clearing paths etc.

ISSUES FOR STREET – YOUTH, VULNERABLE

£27,000 for PFSA hours at Elmhurst and Hindhayes Schools, £5,000 for Community Centre Volunteer Driver Scheme, £4,600 for Salvation Army foodbank and Christmas, £4,400 towards repairing lift in Community Centre. It has been assumed that the remaining £14,000 will be spent on assistance for Crispin School and/or another local organisation.

MOVE WAR MEMORIAL

In 2021/22 a £5,000 grant was received from Merriman Park Community Group towards the cost of moving the war memorial to the corner of the Park which totalled over £21,000. The Council at this time agreed that £5,000 be earmarked for the sensory garden in the Park.

STRODE ROAD ALLOTMENTS

£788 - 50% of £1,575 under new contract with SLH Services from 1st November 2021 for 3 years to carry out clearing the ditch, drains and path, and trimming the hedge. The cost is shared with Crispin School due to the shared boundary.

ANTI GRAFFITI/VANDALISM

£250 spent to date on spray and other equipment for the community graffiti cleaning days organised by Councillor P. Goater. It has been assumed that a further £250 will be spent by the year end.

GREEN ISSUES

This code has been used for expenditure on cycle racks etc. to see what has been spent on climate change initiatives. There is no allocation for this at present. Funding for cycle racks has come from Section 106 funds.

CYCLEWAY EXTENSION

£55,300.55 Section 106 funding from Street Business Park for improvements to the pedestrian network and associated works in the vicinity with no time limit. The former ACPO submitted a bid to Somerset County Council for Climate Change Emergency funding after 1st December for around £45,000 to extend the cycle/walk way from the entrance to Clarks Village car park off the bypass to the roundabout. However this was not successful.

SCC will now hopefully carry out the works as part of more extensive works in that area and will use the Section 106 funding. Plans have been prepared for the project and permission will need to be obtained by SCC from Clarks International. Planning consent will not be necessary as the works are being carried out by SCC.

STREET SKATE PARK

£11,640 estimated expenditure in 2022/23 including the higher cost of the new contract with SLH Services from 1st November 2021, annual independent inspection £306 and ad hoc repairs etc. including £2,480 to replace the damaged surfacing. This gives an overspend of around £1,945.

Under the new contract the cost for a full year from 2022/23 will be £7,995 for maintenance and inspections with £1,400 allowance for ad hoc repairs etc. and £300 for graffiti removal/vandalism.

MERRIMAN PARK

£33,755 estimated expenditure in 2022/23 including the higher cost of the new contract with SLH Services from 1st November 2021, annual trees survey and category 1 works, £150 annual inspection of 2 play areas and ad hoc repairs due to vandalism, graffiti removal etc.

Under the new contract the cost for a full year from 2022/23 will be £29,780 for maintenance and inspections with £1,100 allowance for ad hoc repairs etc. and £1,800 for graffiti removal/vandalism.

In 2020/21 £101,350 was spent on a new 0 to 11 years play area and combination gate (£50,000 from Earmarked Reserves and £50,000 grant from a local trust).

EVENTS

CHAIR'S INVESTITURE/AWARDS

£650 estimated expenditure - £200 light buffet, £300 Hecks cider, £100 Freedom scroll, photo and frame, awards, £50 engraving on 3 shields – donation requested from Chamber of Commerce. Underspend of £550.

CHRISTMAS EVENT/LIGHTS/PARTY

£14,048 estimated expenditure - £9,042 hire/install/remove lights High Street and Parish Rooms – 1 year agreement, £1,100 road closure, £500 stage, £500 static feature, £250 choir, £650 banners and signs, £500 newspaper adverts, £150 satsumas, games, decorations SPC stall, £500 10 music acts, £164 wheat pens, £141 SPC banners, £250 roaming Santa, £300 older persons party. Underspend of £2,794.

Additional £3,934 added for 2023/24 as the new contract for lights is likely to be higher.

MERRIMAN PARK FUN DAY

£6,079 expenditure - £2,371 festoon lighting, £700 sound, £250 banner patches, £422 security, £508 First Aid, £340 4 large bins, £80 flyers/posters, £315 toilets, £110 traffic cones, £400 marquee (£300 for 2018, 2019 and 2021), £240 scaffolding steps for stage, £141 SPC banners, £38 sweets and games for SPC stall, £164 wheat pens. Overspend of £79. The Merriman Park Community Group made a collection during the event and raises funds to improve the Park.

REMEMBRANCE/OTHER

£1,150 estimated expenditure - £300 for road closure for Remembrance, £250 donation to British Legion, £300 10 new poppies and put up/take down in High Street. Assumed that no other events will be held other than a small twinning event at £300. Underspend of £1,850. (£360 for 10 eco wreaths from Chairs Allowance).

ALTERATION OF PARISH ROOMS

The total allocated for the project was £258,960 with £52,718 allocated in 2019/20 and £206,242 in 2020/21. £177,408 for the works, £50,000 for the library interior and £31,552 for project costs – architect, surveys etc. This was funded by a loan of £100,000 from PWLB, £50,000 from earmarked reserves, £50,000 SCC grant for library furniture, shelving etc. with any remaining funds being given to SPC as a grant, £17,640 allocation 2019/20, £35,078 reallocation 2019/20 from Issues for Street, £6,242 additional allocation 2020/21.

The Parish Rooms was transformed in 2020 into a light, spacious, modern, multiple use building capable of delivering many kinds of valuable and exciting services to the local community. The exterior of the building was completely refurbished and should not require further work or expense for years other than minor maintenance and repainting woodwork every 5 years. £5,000 in earmarked reserves for this.

INCOME

PRECEPT 2023/24 AND 2024/25

The New Somerset Council may decide to alter or close some facilities/services from 2023 on if local councils do not agree to take them on such as public toilets. It is therefore possible that more staff will be needed and costs will increase. Service alignment will be achieved for Vesting Day in respect of the County and 4 District Councils eg. on whether the New Somerset Council or local councils will fund the emptying of litter and dog bins.

Due to the unitary changes, last year a new allocation of £100,000 for Council Reform – staffing/assets/services was established from 2022/23. The cost of an additional full time officer with on costs could be around £30,000 alone. If the £55,000 allocated for the vulnerable is committed then only £30,000 Contingency Fund will remain with flexibility for whatever arises during the year. A further increase may be considered necessary in 2023/24 in view of rising energy costs etc. although the effect on residents must also be borne in mind. Examples of precept levels are set out at the start of the report for consideration.

BANK INTEREST

This increased considerably in 2022/23 due to higher rates with Nat West and CCLA.

ROOM HIRE PARISH ROOMS

Income for 2022/23 estimated at £300 as hiring of the 2 meeting rooms on the 1st floor is still sporadic. The ACCE is advertising the rooms more widely now.

SECTION 106 CYCLE/WALKWAY AND SCC CLIMATE CHANGE BID

£55,300.55 Section 106 funding held by Mendip District Council from Street Business Park to use for improvements to the pedestrian network and associated works in the vicinity, with no time limit. The proposal is to provide a tarmac path to link up the cycle/walk route between the roundabout by Glaston Road and the entrance to The Grange car park. The total cost is estimated at £100,000. Somerset County Council will now hopefully carry out the works as part of a larger project using the Section 106 funding.

REIMBURSEMENTS

The external auditors, PKF Littlejohn drew attention to this when auditing the Annual Return for year ended 31st March 2021 and stated that reimbursements should be netted off against the corresponding expenditure code. This will be done from 2021/22 on.

GRANTS RECEIVED

£1,000 from a local trust for the fixing of the new murals in the Library Garden.

GRANT SCC LIBRARY

It was agreed that SCC would contribute £50,000 to the alteration of the Parish Rooms with the cost of new furniture, shelves, IT equipment etc. in the Library likely to total about £30,000. The remaining £21,078 was paid to SPC as a grant in 2020/21.

SUPPLY LIBRARY SERVICES

It has been assumed that the CLP agreement will carry on after the break clause of 31st March 2023 and that SCC will continue to pay the annual grant of £15,000.

LIBRARY INCOME

Fees when ordering books etc. and any donations. The Library will be a 'warm space' for the community during the Autumn and Winter of 2022/23. A card reader will be purchased by the Council for use in the Library and it is hoped that income will then increase substantially.

BALANCES REQUIRED AT 31ST MARCH, 2024

GENERAL REVENUE RESERVES

SALC recommends unearmarked reserves are a minimum of about 6 months revenue expenditure in the current difficult financial climate - £254,591 for expenditure of £509,182 in 2022/23 and a maximum of 12 months revenue expenditure. The reason for setting the level for general revenue reserves should be minuted and I recommend that the sum should be £182,596 for 2023/24 to maintain current assets such as Street Skate Park, the Parish Rooms and Merriman Park and fund new projects or services as they arise.

The New Somerset Council will operate from 1st April 2023. The Council has a high profile in the community and is involved in many different local issues. People/organisations contact the staff daily for information and advice.

SUMMARY

Balances from 2021/22 to 2022/23 will increase by around £92,104 depending on expenditure such as on vulnerable people and council reform. Earmarked reserves at 31st March 2024 as proposed are attached.

Funds can continue to be earmarked for specific purposes and can be used for other purposes subject to agreement by the Council. The budget for 2023/24 allocates £30,000 for the Contingency Fund, £100,000 for Council Reform and £55,000 for Issues for Street giving £185,000 in flexible funds available for whatever purposes the Council agrees are needed. The £55,000 will be used to support community organisations such as the Salvation Army, Baptist Church and Crispin Community Centre and bids will be invited in 2023 for youth outreach work and mental health services.

The 3 year maintenance agreement with SLH Services for the maintenance/inspection of Merriman Park and the Skate Park and other works started on 1st November 2021. It is good practice to consider quotes for such agreements for 3 to 5 years as this should reduce the overall cost. The hiring of the Christmas lights from Blachere for the High Street and Parish Rooms was under a 3 year agreement which was due to end after Christmas 2021 but was then rolled over to Christmas 2022. The 3 year insurance agreement with Zurich will end on 7th June 2024. The agreement for internal audit and payroll with Probusiness includes the year ended 31st March 2024.

Projects etc. are funded using the current budget, earmarked reserves, Section 106 funding and grants from local trusts/people.

INFORMATION FOR COUNCIL TAX LEAFLET

The Committee is asked to agree that the following information should appear on the District Council leaflet/website -

Expenditure	2022/23	2023/24
Administration/CCTV/Events	£202,448	£226,409
Grants	£111,312	£111,312
Greenbank Swimming Pool	£ 18,000	£ 30,000
Skate Park/Merriman Park	£ 43,495	£ 49,984
Parish Rooms incl. loans/Community/High Street	£130,753	£141,295
Council Reform/Community Safety	£101,000	£101,000
	Gross Expenditure	£607,008
Less:	Income	£ 18,160
	Reserves	£ 8,848
	Precept	£580,000
		£638,000

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Receipts and Payments July to September 2022

On 18th June 2013 the Council agreed, as recommended by Probusiness Ltd. the internal auditor, that the quarterly report on income and expenditure by code be attached to the Committee minutes when it is considered and details be given in the minutes of comments or explanations made when considering variations between the budget set and expenditure. This was to evidence the reasons behind any such variations and that these had been considered by the Council.

BUDGET VARIATIONS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2022

INCOME DETAIL

1677 Merriman Park Grants Received

£623 grant received from Merriman Park Community Group for the cost of inflatables at the Merriman Park Fun Day.

1377 Contributions to Projects

Monies received from stall holders at the Festive Christmas market.

1190 Interest Received.

Interest payments remain significantly higher than anticipated due to increase in interest rates, particularly for the CCLA account.

EXPENDITURE DETAIL

1301 Contingency Fund

A grant payment of £1000 was made to Strode College for the book festival – the Council took this from the £5,000 Creative Mendip grant with the other £4,000 funding the new murals in the Library Garden.

1321 Training Clerk & Members

Qualification fees for CILCA training for the Deputy Clerk and Assistant Clerk have been incurred. It is anticipated that both Officers will complete the training prior to the end of March next year.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
01.11.22

To: Policy and Finance Committee
From: Clerk
Subject: Periodic Reports and Inspections

Bank Transfers and Reconciliations

The quarterly report on any transfers between accounts for 1st July to 30th September 2022 is detailed in the Receipts and Payments for that period – agenda item 6

The detailed income and expenditure report for each month is emailed to members with the latest bank reconciliations and earmarked reserves schedule. The latest bank statements received have been checked and a reconciliation completed successfully for each account – see agenda item 6.

Internal Control

As agreed arrangements will be made for Councillor Carswell, P. Goater or Sparkes to carry out the quarterly inspection of accounts from 1st July 2022. Councillors Carswell, P.Goater and Sparkes are also checking the accounts via Bankline. They will verify the bank statement against the reconciliation with the Clerk or DCRO in attendance to answer any queries. Any other member is welcome to inspect the accounts by arrangement with the Clerk.

Staff Mileage and Hours

The Chair or Vice-Chair of the Staffing Committee or another member as necessary have approved the TOIL and annual leave for staff to 30th September 2022. One mileage claim has been submitted from the Clerk and verified by the Chair and the DCRO will submit a claim shortly.

L.A. Ruff
Clerk
01.11.22