

MINUTES of the Finance Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 8th January 2018 at Crown Chambers, Melksham at 7.40 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Richard Wood (Council Chair), John Glover (Council Vice-Chair & Committee Chair), Alan Baines (Committee Vice Chair), Paul Carter and Paul Taylor

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Justina Barber (Finance Assistant).

Housekeeping & Announcements: Cllr. Glover welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedure in the event of a fire.

371/17 **Apologies:** Cllr. Holder had given his apologies for health reasons, which were accepted.

372/17 **Declarations of Interest:** Both officers declared an interest regarding staff pay discussions. Cllr Wood declared an interest in the Chair's Allowance. It was noted that those Councillors living in the parish had a previously approved Dispensation for setting the Precept (*Min 010/17b Annual Council May 17*)

373/17 **Dispensation Requests for this Meeting:** None.

374/17 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.

375/17 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):**

a) Background information: The members noted a variety of documents relating to CIL which gave its background, training notes, a "ready reckoner" for calculating CIL for the parish, definition for its use etc. In particular, that funds must be spent on:

"a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or

b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area"

Parish councils have wider spending powers than Wiltshire Council for CIL, provided that it meets the requirement to "support the development of the area". Members felt it was unclear over what the community needed to do to determine their infrastructure priorities. Was this by survey, general requests to the council, the emerging Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, or existing documents such as the Joint Strategic Assessment which drive the Melksham Area Board priorities?

Recommended: *The parish council seek guidance on how they undertake/prove the following statement in the Wiltshire Council planning notes "your community determines what the infrastructure priorities are".*

As a simple guide, CIL equates to approx. £8,000 per property (not applicable to social/affordable housing) with the parish council receiving 15% of this on any eligible development approved since CIL was adopted by Wiltshire Council on 12th May 2015. This figure is capped at £100 per dwelling, so for Melksham Without at present this is capped at £358,800 per year based on 3,588 dwellings in the

Parish. The situation changes once a Neighbourhood Plan in the area is adopted, with the receipts based on 25% and no cap.

CIL is also to be paid by the developer or landowner in 3 instalments, if over £35,000. The Clerk had queried this, having received notification of the first CIL payments to the parish council of approx. £4,700 in 3 instalments. The Wiltshire Council CIL Officer had explained that developers can apply for an instalment plan if they cannot afford to pay 100% within 60 days of commencement of development.

If a parish council has failed to spend CIL funds passed to it within 5 years of receipt, or has applied funds not in accordance with the Regulations, then Wiltshire Council can serve a notice on the parish council requiring it to repay some or all of the receipts passed, however, Wiltshire Council will be required to spend any recovered funds in the parish council's area.

To ensure transparency the parish council has an obligation to publish the following information each year:

- Total CIL receipts
- Total expenditure
- A summary of what CIL was spent on
- Total amounts of receipts retained at the end of the reported year from that year and previous years

b) CIL Eligibility of planning applications: The Clerk had clarified and checked a variety of planning applications within the parish with the CIL Officer at Wiltshire Council to check the eligibility for CIL funding with the following decisions.

The following applications are eligible for CIL:

16/09559/FUL, Land adjacent to Commerce Way, Proposed hotel, drive-thru coffee shop and retail unit. £14,534.92 to be received in one payment in 2017/18.

15/06732/FUL, 63 Shaw Hill, Alteration of existing dwelling to create 2 detached dwellings, plus the erection of 2 new detached dwellings. Total of £4,702.51. £3,056.63 already received, with the 3rd of 3 instalments due in 2017/18 at £1,645.88.

17/01096/REM, Land north of Sandridge Common, Reserved Matters approval for the development of 100 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure, parking, landscaping and local area of play. £22,735.89 to be received the last week of March 2018, £26,524.86 to be received the last week of March 2019 and £26,524.86 to be received the last week of September 2019

The following applications are NOT eligible for CIL:

16/05466/FUL, Greenfield site between A350 & Commerce Way, Erection of new Jaguar Land Rover dealership. Not eligible as "Sui Generis" (*Sui Generis buildings are those that do not fall within any particular use class*).

16/09699/FUL, Opposite Outmarsh Farm, New home for Wiltshire Air Ambulance including admin office, operational offices, training facilities. Operational uses to include hangar, secure medical storage, helipad, approach strip, vehicle wash

facilities. Not eligible as none of the elements attract a CIL charge (mixture of planning classes B1/B8 & D1).

The following applications are NOT eligible for CIL yet as approved outline applications however, they will be eligible when they become approved Reserved matters applications:

16/00497/OUT, Land east of Semington Road, Outline application for the erection of up to 150 dwellings with access, new village hall and areas of open space. Estimation of 90 houses (60%) eligible for CIL at 3 x instalments of approx. £36,000.

14/10461/OUT, Land east of Spa Road, Outline application for up to 450 houses with associated access and engineering operations, land for extension of medical facilities or community facility, and extension of Eastern Relief Road. Estimation of 270 houses (60%) eligible for CIL at 3 x instalments of approx. £108,000.

16/01123/OUT, Land south of Western Way, Outline application for residential development of 235 dwellings, primary school with early years nursery and open space provision. Estimation of 141 houses (60%) eligible for CIL at 3 x instalments of approx. £56,500.

All the above estimations have been based on a 15% pre-adopted Neighbourhood Plan basis as the timing of the applications being submitted before adoption is not known or predictable.

Recommended: *The parish council check the following queries with the Wiltshire Council CIL Officer: 1. Why are 2nd and 3rd instalments in different financial years the same amount if they are index linked? 2. To check again that applications that have outline approval before the CIL adoption date will be eligible for CIL as their Reserved Matters application is after the CIL adoption date (applies to 14/10461/OUT).*

c) Advice on treatment of CIL for accounting purposes:

The Clerk had sought advice from both Wiltshire Council and the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) on the treatment of CIL for accounting purposes; the query arose as Rialtas (the Council's specialist accountancy software company) had explained that as the funds have to be returned if not used then they are technically not income in accounting terms and had treated them as such at the 31st March 17 closedown of the Council's accounts. The SLCC National Finance Adviser had advised that CIL is to be treated as Income on receipt, with any amount unspent at the year end being moved to an earmarked reserve. The 2018 edition of the Practitioners Guide will reflect this.

d) Planned CIL expenditure: The members noted the suggestions to Melksham Town Council for potential local CIL spending to be listed in the Neighbourhood Plan (*Min. 355/16 Finance Committee Feb 17*). The parish council had started a list of expenditure that could be taken from CIL receipts but to date the only item was the installation of a footway (pavement) to the bus stop at Valldata, Bowerhill (*Min. 238/17k Highway & Streetscene Committee Sept 17*).

Cllr Glover explained that he had met with the Clerk during the previous week for a Budget review meeting after the draft budget papers had been circulated pre-Christmas to the Finance Committee members. The Clerk had shown in the draft Budget expenditure for general running costs and future projects that the parish council had previously indicated they were supporting. The draft Budget was still to be reviewed by the Committee but it was agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance Committee that there was not much scope for cutting expenditure in the draft Budget if the Council wanted to provide the services and projects it was currently planning. This would require a large Precept of £253,000 for the forthcoming year, compared to £178,000 this year and £221,000 in 2016/17. It was noted that although there had been a loss of income from the transfer of 733 houses from the parish to the Town under the Community Governance Review which took effect on 1st April 2017 that this had not resulted in a loss of service provision required by the Parish Council as a result of that boundary change.

Following that review meeting, a spreadsheet had been prepared of potential spend in the 2018/19 Budget to be taken from CIL receipts rather than adding to the Precept requirement. The Clerk had then checked with Wiltshire Council and the SLCC on whether this expenditure met the CIL eligibility. At this stage, only those that had received a confirmation had been treated as such in the draft Budget documents and were shown as expenditure from CIL. This showed a spend of £48,364 from CIL in 2018/19 from confirmed receipts received/to be received in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Recommended: *The parish council fund the expenditure of the following items in the 2018/19 budget from confirmed CIL receipts, rather than from the Precept.*

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| <i>Contribution to CATG schemes</i> | <i>£5,500</i> |
| <i>Flood prevention - ditch clearance (man + digger)</i> | <i>£1,500</i> |
| <i>Flood prevention - contribution to DEFRA scheme</i> | <i>£5,000</i> |
| <i>Grass cutting and bin emptying in play areas</i> | <i>£3,124</i> |
| <i>Grass cutting and bin emptying in sportsfield</i> | <i>£7,990</i> |
| <i>ROSPA play area annual inspections</i> | <i>£450</i> |
| <i>Play area repairs and new equipment</i> | <i>£17,000</i> |
| <i>Play area safety surfacing cleaning</i> | <i>£2,800</i> |
| <i>To take on George Ward playing field project</i> | <i>£5,000</i> |
| | <i>£48,364</i> |

The Clerk suggested that the Precept requirement could further be reduced by not moving funds into Reserves for future projects that were for developing infrastructure and therefore could be paid from CIL receipts, especially as the parish had four planning applications approved with a total of approx. 935 dwellings across them (as demonstrated in Min. 375/17b). This would be looked at when the Reserves Account was reviewed.

Cllr Glover suggested that the parish council review how it allocates CIL for projects when the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted as this is a joint Plan with Melksham Town Council and some funds could be attributed to joint projects or a split of funds.

376/17 Review of Financial Reserves Policy: The members reviewed the policy. Cllr Glover advised that a few year's ago the External Auditors had noted that the Council did not hold a very big General Reserve (carry forward figure at year end) and that although

there was no specific figure or percentage recommended it was generally accepted that the Auditors were looking for a figure of 3/4-6 months running costs to be carried forward at year end. The Clerk advised that if you took last year's expenditure (before movements to and from Reserves) the cost was £212k which equated to £17,600 per month. The members discussed the healthy amounts now held in the Earmarked Reserves which should cover any eventuality that may come out of the blue for the Council as well as for planned replacement of assets and forthcoming projects. It therefore thought that such a large sum of money did not need to be shown in the General Reserve as the Council could use funds from the Earmarked Reserves if such an eventuality arose. It was noted £206,825 was held in the Earmarked Reserves which included a £60,000 General Contingency Reserve (over 3 months running costs).

Recommended: *The Council amend its Reserves Policy to change the following statement to the section under "Adequacy and Use of Reserves" under the "General Reserves" paragraph.*

FROM: *"General reserves will usually lie within the range of three to twelve months of gross expenditure"*

TO: *"General reserves will usually lie at two months of gross expenditure, as the Council hold sufficient Earmarked reserves to deal with unexpected events or emergencies and to provide a working capital cushion to deal with uneven cashflows."*

376/17 **Provisional local government finance settlement 2018/19:** It was noted that on 19th December 2017 the Rt. Hon Sajid Javid MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, gave his statement to the House of Commons on the Local Government finance settlement; specifically that "the government intends to defer the setting of referendum principles for town and parish councils for 3 years". Cllr Glover drew attention to the further statement made that "this is subject to the sector taking all available steps to mitigate the need for Council Tax increasesand the government seeing clear evidence of restraint in the increases set by the sector as a whole". In last year's statement, it was expected that town and parish councils clearly demonstrate restraint when setting increases that are not a direct result of taking on additional responsibilities.

377/17 **Planned Precept for Wiltshire Police for 2018/19:** Members noted that Angus McPherson MBE, Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon, was currently seeking the views of Wiltshire residents on a proposed increase of £12 per year for the Police Precept.

378/17 **Budget Review:** The Committee reviewed the Income and Expenditure for the current financial year, and the proposals for the financial year 2018/19 for the following accounts. The Chair, Cllr Glover explained that he had spent some time during the previous week reviewing the figures with the Clerk and had made a few changes to the initial Budget discussion document already so that the overall impact could be reviewed at this meeting.

a) Allotment Account:

The Income for this account for this year was expected at £2,752 an increase of some £500 over the amount expected. Some of this was due to the double rent charged to non-residents of the parish, which this year included some tenants who become non-residents due to the Boundary change under the Community Governance Review. The Council had subsequently decided to refund this

additional charge for those in this situation (£148.50). Expenditure for the current year was expected at £1,978.50, with £2,000 budgeted for.

For the following year 2018/19 income was expected at £2,207.25 and expenditure at £1,800. There was a reduction in costs as the Parish Caretaker was paid a mileage allowance for his weekly visits to the allotments, but this is not applicable to the new Allotment Warden whose mileage is not paid for as it is his only place of work for the parish council, and the Warden is on a different pay scale point than the Caretaker. It was agreed that the allotment grass cutting costs should not be paid for by CIL receipts as per the grass cutting in the play areas and playing field, as these costs should be covered by the rental income from the tenants.

Recommended:

Revised Income for 2017/18 £2,752.00 (was £2,234.25)

Proposed Income for 2018/19 £2,207.25

Revised Expenditure for 2017/18 £1,978.50 (was £2,000)

Proposed Expenditure for 2018/19 £1,800

The Council do NOT increase the rent for tenants from 1st October 2018.

Cllr Glover commented that with any future housing developments related to the Melksham Link canal that may butt up to the allotments there may be a requirement for reinforced fencing to the allotment sites in the future. The Clerk noted that there may also be a requirement in the future for more plainings/scalping at the Briansfield allotment carpark. Although these are provided free of charge when local roads are being scraped, there would still be a requirement for some groundworks, and a banksman for deliveries, which would have a cost. It was noted that there was no specific Allotment Reserve anymore, but this could be a good use of CIL funding moving forward or a request to potential housing developers.

b) Jubilee Sports Field Account:

Cllr Glover reminded members that the Council had always been aware that taking on the Sports Field and Pavilion at Bowerhill would cost a considerable amount of money each year, but what had not been anticipated at that time was that it would be under utilised in the future as a result of the building of Oakfields, a new football and rugby facility, which had not been known would be built at the time. Perhaps a way forward would be for a working party to look at ways of enhancing the current provision to make more usable by a wider range of sports and organisations, for example, putting in an all-weather playing surface for a different sport such as hockey, or by building an extension to enlarge the lounge room. A potential regular user had looked at hiring the lounge for yoga sessions, but it was not suitable as only 5/6 yoga mats could comfortably sit in the room.

The other possibility was that the Pavilion could be used in some way as part of the transition arrangements following the announcement in October by Wiltshire Council that the Christie Miller sports centre would most likely close before the opening of the replacement Campus. The Clerk had contacted Wiltshire Council following that announcement and members of the project team and property department had since visited the Pavilion and requested building plans which had been supplied. The Pavilion provided a small carpark, changing rooms and showers etc and could be considered as in close enough walking distance from the existing Christie Miller car park. All that was missing was an actual playing surface, and perhaps the

project team were looking at the possibility of installing a hard surface with an inflatable dome covering like the facilities at Chippenham; that could be left behind as a legacy. It was recognised that these plans would have to fit in with the legal requirements as a Field in Trust but would hope that this would be looked on favourably as providing a transitional arrangement to allow the continued community use of these facilities for a number of years until the Campus opens. With three 11 vs 11 underutilised football pitches, there could well be room to accommodate this sort of solution.

There were now only two pub teams using the football facilities at the Sports field and Pavilion, who both played in the Chippenham & District Sunday League. Although, the old AFC Melksham team (now formally part of Melksham Town FC) had played a one-off quarter final cup game the day before as their pitch at Oakfields had been waterlogged and unplayable. Although the income was welcome, the Clerk noted the admin time for one off rentals set against the £60 income which also contributed to the running costs of the field, building and match specific cleaning in the pavilion.

It was recognised that the parish council cover the cost of the sports field facilities for the enjoyment of all residents at all times, but the Clerk raised a concern that the costs associated with the running of the Pavilion and football pitches were only for two teams on Sunday mornings, with perhaps only 22 members that may not even live in the parish. The members then reviewed the Jubilee Sports Field Account to see what it would cost if it was run merely as a playing field with the building mothballed ie: no income but no costs specifically for the provision of football or using the building; this was still estimated at £19,000 due to the rates and security arrangements. Members thought that it was not appropriate to close the building in the coming year, especially as discussions were to be held with Wiltshire Council about transitional arrangements for Christie Miller closing, and that only £5/6k would be potentially saved.

Recommended: *The parish council continue to run the Jubilee Sports Field and Pavilion as a football facility for 2017/18 and 2018/19 but review for the following year.*

Members discussed ways forward to drum up more users for the facilities. The Clerk noted that the advertising banners were being produced to attract business users locally. Discussions had been held with the cricket club, who expressed an interest if they had a 3rd/4th team in the future. The local AVR running club had relocated to the new Trowbridge Rugby Club when that had been built. The council had offered the facilities at no cost to the Wiltshire Council Bowerhill Industrial Estate Business Group when they next met, to showcase the facilities available. Several organisations had been shown around and sent details regarding use for training purposes and martial arts. The small size of the lounge area has proved prohibitive and this was to be borne in mind when the size of the new village halls and community centres are built as part of the agreements of new housing developments; as they could be enhanced by CIL funds.

Recommended: *1. The parish council mailshot the 150+ businesses in the Bowerhill Industrial Estate to advertise the facilities available at the Pavilion. Cllr Paul Carter to hand deliver the letters.*

2. The Clerk continues to pursue the use of the Sports field and Pavilion facilities as a transitional arrangement for providing community sports facilities in the void

between Christie Miller sports centre closing and the opening of the new Campus facilities.

Members reviewed the expenditure line items for the current and forthcoming financial years. No invoice had been received for Rates for this financial year and so this figure was removed from this year's budget figures, but shown for next, however it was noted that this needed to be addressed. It was agreed some years ago that the Sports Field account would show £10,000 coming from the Precept each year via the Reserve route, but in the current and following year it shows £18,000 moving across to the Sports Field account from the specific Reserve "Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion maintenance - Annual Sum moved into Account to make up shortfall. ANNUAL SUM MOVED INTO ACCOUNT TO MAKE UP SHORTFALL".

In terms of reviewing the Charges for the facilities. Colin Brown, from the Recreation & Leisure department at Wiltshire Council had been in touch following the visit to the facilities by the Property and Campus Project teams to see if he could assist with promoting the facilities, but to date the only football teams he had provided contacts for were Trowbridge who had played at Bowerhill last season but left as they did not have as many teams this season. Colin did comment that some teams had expressed that they felt the hire charges were expensive.

Recommended: *The Asset Management Committee meet to discuss ways of attracting more users to the Sports Field facilities and to compare the costs of the council football facilities in comparison with other similar facilities in Wiltshire.*

Recommended:

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| <i>Revised Income for 2017/18</i> | <i>£2,362 (was £2,887.50)</i> |
| <i>Proposed Income for 2018/19</i> | <i>£2,300</i> |
| <i>Revised Expenditure for 2017/18</i> | <i>£22,855 (was £22,980)</i> |
| <i>Proposed Expenditure for 2018/19</i> | <i>£25,720</i> |

c) General Account:

There was a larger amount of Income expected for the current year, with £95,860.64 expected excluding the Precept, with only £54,157.67 originally budgeted for; some £41,700 extra.

This is due to the following:

The income from two Area Board grant applications to be considered on 7th February; both are applications for PIGS funding (Paths Improvement Grant Scheme) with 50% match funding of £5k towards an additional piece of footpath to connect the existing paths at public open space at Hornchurch Road and £400 for a new kissing gate to the rear of Shaw Playing Field to make it more accessible.

It was noted that the contribution from the Sandridge Solar Farm was significantly less than last year as many of the houses in the parish that were part of the formula calculation were now in the Town parish following the boundary review, however 100 new houses were being built in the parish which could affect the figure in years to come. For next year it was shown at the same amount, although could be some £50 more as index linked.

The contribution from s106 funding had been estimated at £18,255 but had actually been invoiced at £22,549.80 to Wiltshire Council to reflect the actual spend to refurbish Kestrel Court play area. The s106 Officer had advised in late December that this s106 contribution had now been received by them from Persimmon Homes and the Parish Council officers were chasing this payment (as the work had been completed in January 2017). The remainder of the s106 funds was now shown as £14,009 in the following year as the contribution to the refurbishment of the play area surfacing at Hornchurch Road, as this work would not be undertaken until the legal transfer had been completed and the weather improves so the surrounding grass area is less waterlogged. The cost of this is considerably more, but £14k is all that is left in the s106 fund.

The biggest change to the expected income for the current financial year is in CIL contributions with funds expected from (*refer to Min. 374/17b*):

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| | 63 Shaw Hill | £ 4,702.51 |
| | Travelodge | £14,534.92 |
| | Sandridge development | <u>£22,735.59</u> |
| 2017/18 | TOTAL CIL RECEIPTS | £41,973.02 |

£1,500 had been received from Wiltshire Council as an Apprentice Grant, towards the setup cost of a new apprentice position, this had not been budgeted for. £10,000 had been shown as grant income against the new project to take on and develop the former George Ward playing fields, but the project was not at that stage yet, and the £10k has been removed from the expected income for this year. The amount reclaimed for VAT from last year's payments was £17,805.82 whereas £24,278 had been estimated based on the expenditure that had originally been planned.

Members reviewed the Income anticipated for 2018/19 with £14,009 as the s106 contribution towards the Hornchurch Road play area refurbishment and confirmed CIL receipts as shown:

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|---------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | Sandridge development | <u>£26,524.86</u> |
| 2018/19 | TOTAL CIL RECEIPTS | £26,524.86 |

It was acknowledged that developments with outline planning approvals could feasibly submit their Reserved Matters applications and commence development in 2018/19 but as this was not quantifiable it could not be shown as projected income in the future Budget, only confirmed amounts have been shown.

The VAT reclaim for this year's expenditure is expected to be £7,865.81.

Members then reviewed the expenditure line items in the draft Budget papers. The expenditure budgeted for 2017/18 was £191,899.75, but the expected year end figure was £179,205.47, some £12,700 less.

The cost of the telephone/broadband in the office was shown as a £400 increase to that budgeted to reflect the increased use of the 'phone as there were now 4 lines not 1 line, and the council's electronic storage now on the cloud. An increase of £60 was shown for next year to reflect an additional £5 per month for fibre provision. For IT support a sum of £900 is shown for this year and next which reflects the £250 annual support of Rialtas Omega and their £515 year end close down fee with a

sum for Avon IT for general IT support.

The contribution to the Market Place public toilets had been budgeted and set to a £7,500 ceiling but the actual cost had come in at £5,616; but shown again at the maximum limit of £7,500 for 2018/19.

The Clerk advised that with the latest Electoral Register there was a condition that it is only used for establishing if a resident was an elector for any vote taken at the Annual Parish meeting and for reasons relating to crime. She had queried with Wiltshire Council if this meant that the parish council officers could not check residents' addresses for writing ditch clearance letters for example. Therefore, the figure for Land Registry searches (£3 per search) had been shown increased for next year to allow for address searches for letter writing, and for the current year based on the searches undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan landowner engagement piece of work.

The contribution to the joint Neighbourhood Plan project had been shown at £11,000 for this year, but was now shown as £2,000 for this year and next as it had now been confirmed that the Plan Referendum will be paid for by Wiltshire Council (and claimed back from the Government). A grant of £10,325 had been received from Locality but had been banked by Melksham Town Council as the lead council on the project (*refer to Min 315/17h*); and expenditure on consultants was being paid from that grant funding.

Councillors had discussed the forthcoming GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) coming into force in May 2018 (*Min 355/17 d*) and agreed some funds had to be put in place to fund this in terms of a Data Audit, training and also the possible change to councillors' email accounts and so £2,500 had been budgeted for 2018/19 for this.

The remainder of general running costs expenditure had been based on a slight uplift to the previous year to reflect a rise in inflation. Photocopying costs are hard to ascertain as the council now have a new copier that is more cost effective for black and white copies, but there may be an increase in colour copying now that facility is available inhouse for both A4 and A3 copies; in the past colour copying had been done inhouse for small quantities of A4 copies or by a local commercial printer for A3 copies or larger quantities. The new copier had been purchased without a booklet making facility but this may need to be looked at again for a retrospective fit as the quote from a commercial printer for the re issue of 700 "what to do in a flood" leaflet was expensive, and the officers were looking at how difficult and time consuming this was to produce inhouse without the booklet maker. The costs for copying for 2017/18 were estimated at £1,300 for the current year, but the spend to end of October had been £1,266 already so this had been increased to £1,600; and £2,000 shown for the following year to cover any increase and the possibility of adding a booklet making facility.

Postage costs increase each year and the Clerk explained that an exercise had been undertaken in the past to see if it was more cost effective for the Caretaker to deliver the agenda packs, but it was much cheaper to do by post. The Clerk also explained that there was a cost implication to the council in officer time if 13 councillors called into the office to collect their agenda packs rather than receive in

the post.

For grant aid for 2018/19; a sum of £8,000 is shown for grants being provided under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972; and £8,000 under s133 for village halls. The Clerk had sought guidance as to whether grants to village halls could be classed as maintaining and improving infrastructure and so eligible for CIL but as confirmation had not yet been received this had not been shown as expenditure from CIL at this stage. A separate grant of £1,000 had been shown for Young Melksham using funds from the Bowerhill Youth Club Reserve as per this year, and the previous separate budget heading for Melksham Community Area Partnership (MCAP) had now been subsumed into the s137 grant budget provision. Also included in the s137 grant fund was an additional £150 on this year to cover any request from the Melksham Christmas Lights for a donation from the parish council as a premises/business in the Market Place, as any such requests were to be added to their grant application in the future (*Min. 315/17g*). £600 is shown as budget provision for the Tourist Info Centre as funding them would be under s144. The distinction of which legal power is being used for the grants is something that the Internal Auditor asked to be tightened up and the actual power shown against the grants and so a virement is required for village halls as the budget heading for village halls just used to cover the two large grants to Bowerhill and Shaw Village halls but needs to reflect the other village halls supported by grant funding such as Whitley Reading Rooms, as per *Min. 350/16c (Finance Committee 20th Feb 2017)*. All the grant provision for 2018/19 show a slight increase on 2017/18 which were in line with the budget provision for that year.

Subscriptions were significantly higher in 2017/18 (£1,500) than originally budgeted for (£525) with the decision made for the parish council to become members of WALC/NALC again at an approximate cost of £1,000. The membership of the Wiltshire and National Association of Local Councils is expected for 2018/19 too.

With regards to Visit Wiltshire, it had been agreed at the last Full Council meeting (*Min. 358/17b*) that the parish council would pay 50% of the cost of this with Melksham Town Council, for the current financial year but councillors again queried the benefit of it to the parish and recommended that no provision was made for this in the forthcoming financial year. The cost for next year would be approx. £400.

The 1/3 split of funding to TransWilts towards the match funding for the Melksham Train Station development project of £3,333 had not been budgeted for and although requested and agreed in July 2016 the invoice was dated 31st March 17 and so not paid until April 2017. £1,000 had been put into the budget for this year for any additional requests, but these were not forthcoming. *Min. 100/16* from the Full Council meeting in July 2016 agreed to fund this £3,333 from the Roundponds Solar Farm Community Benefit funding. The funding was £28,000 in total of which £14k was earmarked for the refurbishment of Wiltshire Council owned play areas to make up the shortfall from the refurbishments not funded from s106 contributions or devolved funding from Wiltshire Council.

Office costs remain on the same basis as originally anticipated for this year, and the same for next except for business rates that the council have received 100% small business relief for this year, but this is unknown for next. A fire risk assessment has been undertaken for Crown Chambers, with the meeting for reporting back booked

for 9th January, 2018.. A new photocopier had been purchased this financial year at a cost of £2,250 which had not been shown for specifically in this year but a specific Reserve of £2,000 will fund this. £1,000 is shown in the budget for the next financial year to cover the installation of another TV screen at the other end of the office to allow more councillors to view images and presentations in meetings, with the possibility of a laptop to power it. A laptop would also be required if planning committee meetings were held off site and access to the online applications would be required. There may also be a requirement for a replacement pc for the Clerk whose pc is getting quite old and is very slow. A complete wipe of its memory and the re-installation of programmes had been undertaken in November to try and address this.

The members noted that the Chair's allowance had been agreed to be increased each year in line with the increase in staff's pay on a nationally agreed basis (as per Wiltshire Council's Remuneration Panel), however last year there was a range of percentage increases which makes this approach difficult, as experienced with assessing a rise for the Apprentice role. It was agreed to increase the Chair's allowance by 2% next year which reflects the lower range of staff pay increases currently being negotiated on nationally.

Staff pay for this financial year shows increases to reflect the increased hours worked, as indicated by the advice from officers (*Min. 319/17e*) and so the pay for the last 9 months had been extrapolated out to 12 months to ascertain an accurate year end anticipated figure.

The members noted the advice from the SLCC that Council employees had been offered a two year pay increase. The offer had been made by the National Employers who negotiate on behalf of UK councils, and will affect one million workers. The proposal is for employees whose salaries start at £19,430 per annum to receive an uplift of 2% as of next April, with a following 2% the following year. Those on the lowest salaries will also receive increases, with unions suggesting these could be as much as 16% over the two years. The offer also includes the introduction of a new national pay spine on 1st April 2019. When Cllr Glover and the Clerk had met to review the budget, they agreed to show an increase of 8% (to reflect 16% over two years) for those staff it applied to. It was noted that as the offer was from the Employers, rather than from the Unions, that these would probably be approved and was likely to have been put in place to address the erosion of differentials in pay scales since the introduction of the Living Wage. Increases were correspondingly shown for next year in National Insurance and Superannuation employer contributions as these are based on staffs' actual pay. The decision to employ the Apprentice Parish Officer next year in a new role post her apprenticeship (*Min. 319/17Cf*) has also been budgeted for.

Staff training costs for this year were more than budgeted for (£500) and likely to be £1,840 with the addition of bookings made for training before the end of the financial year. This includes mandatory training such as first aid & ROSPA renewals, and training for new staff members. A provision of £1,000 is shown for next year too.

£200 had been shown for new equipment for the Parish Caretaker next year for a leaf blower, to clear the leaves more effectively on play area safety surfacing to prevent the build up of moss/algae to prolong the life of the surfacing and to make

less slippery when walked on. The play areas at Shaw, Beanacre and Berryfield are all surrounded by trees.

The further advice received from play area operators was that the moss and algae on safety surfacing affects the porosity of the surface, and this leads to water sitting on the surface rather than soaking through. This water that sits on the surface can then cause cracking when it repeatedly freezes. Cleaning the safety surfaces with a chemical and water spray in the play areas could prolong the life of safety surfacing by several years, and a sum had been shown in the budget of £1,300 for this year and £2,800 for next year for two maintenance visits. This has been shown as coming from CIL funding for the 2018/19 spend.

The parish council resolved to cover the cost of the roundabout maintenance until new sponsors were found for the ex Carson Tyres sponsored roundabout at Bowerhill. This was estimated to cost £2,340 by the end of this financial year. No cost is shown for next year as the contractor has advised that there are interested parties in sponsoring this roundabout and the Clerk reported that she had a call earlier that day of a Bowerhill business interested in sponsoring a couple of other roundabouts in the Bowerhill area.

A sum of £825 had been budgeted for weedspraying but cost £1,329 this year as other areas were added to the schedule. This is reflected in a £1,400 provision shown for next year. This is something that could be taken from CIL but had not been reflected as such in the Budget.

The Highways & Streetscene Committee had recommended a sum of £5,500 for next year, based on the £5,000 provision this year. This clearly meets the eligibility criteria for CIL and this sum for 2018/19 is shown as being funded by CIL. £1,200 had been budgeted for the installation costs of SID (Speed Indicator Device) (£100 per installation) but the estimated spend for this year was only £700 which reflects the summer period when the SID was out of action and under repair. £1,400 has been provided for the following year which includes the adding of another site in the parish, in Semington Road.

Following the first look at the Atkins report for flood alleviation works in Shaw & Whitley, a sum of £1,500 had been shown for ditch clearance work (man + digger) for this year and next. Plus, a contribution of £5k next year towards the Wiltshire Council and Environment Agency funding application to DEFRA to the wider scheme works. The £6,500 provision for next year is shown as being funded by CIL.

For Street Furniture, a sum of £5k was budgeted for this year with £3,250 the anticipated spend this year and only £1k in the budget for next year. It was noted that there had been a councillor request for an additional noticeboard at Whitley, and that officers had suggested a noticeboard at the Bowerhill Sports Field.

Grass cutting and bin emptying is based on the 3year contract agreed last year, but less for this year and next than originally budgeted for to reflect the reduced actual negotiated price; this spend for 2018/19 is taken from CIL. A sum is shown for tree works of £300; provision was required as for example earlier in the day a call had been received from the Parish Caretaker to say a large branch was down in Berryfield play area and was considered dangerous and so a contractor had cleared

immediately.

For play area repairs £500 had been budgeted for this year and just under £2,000 had been spent to address any issues highlighted by the September ROSPA inspection reports. For 2018/19 £31,000 has been budgeted for play area repairs. This is to cover the approved quote of £25k for replacement safety surfacing at Hornchurch Road play area, an area of safety surfacing at Beanacre to be replaced within 12/18 months at £5k and the replacement of the cone climber play equipment at Beanacre for £800/900. It made sense that the safety surfacing would be done at the same time as the replacement of the cone climber. There was £14,000 of s106 funding allocated to the Hornchurch Road play area refurbishment and so only £17,000 of the £31,000 is shown as being funded by CIL. The ROSPA play area inspection cost of £450 for next year is also shown as coming from CIL.

For the project to take on the former George Ward playing fields and develop them a sum of £10k had been shown in expenditure this year against a matched grant funding income of the same amount. These were now both shown as nil for this year as the project had not progressed that far. Melksham Town Council were showing a £5k sum for next year in the budget (still to be approved by their Full Council) and this budget showed the same amount, and shown as being funded from CIL.

A calculation had been made to estimate a sum of £14,768 to be paid out in VAT next year based on the planned expenditure. For this year £16,300 had been estimated but only £7,865 was anticipated as there was less expenditure anticipated.

Recommended:

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Revised Income for 2017/18</i> | <i>£95,860.64 + £178,000 Precept = £273,860.64</i> |
| | <i>was £58,908 + £178,000 Precept = £236,908.00</i> |
| <i>Proposed Income for 2018/19</i> | <i>£54,157.67 + Precept</i> |
| <i>Revised Expenditure for 2017/18</i> | <i>£179,205.47 (was £191,899.75)</i> |
| <i>Proposed Expenditure for 2018/19</i> | <i>£240,725.80</i> |

d) Earmarked Reserves Account:

The members reviewed the Earmarked Reserves Account with the amounts being spent from the Account and the amounts reserved for major projects and contingency funding for both the current and the next financial year.

In line with the council's Financial Reserves Policy, "earmarked reserves are held for specific projects or purposes, or to meet known or predicted liabilities. Specific Reserves are often used to "smooth" the effects of certain expenditure commitments over a period of time thereby reducing the impact of significant expenditure in any one year (e.g. setting up new Village Halls, replacing large items of capital equipment)." The members looked at each line item/specific Reserve and considered if it fell under the eligibility criteria for CIL or not. It was agreed that it would only spend money from Reserves – or put money into Reserves – for this year or next if it could **not** be funded from CIL in the future. This principle was applied, and only the following movements to/from Earmarked Reserves are therefore recommended.

Money had been put into a Reserve for funding a replacement photocopier when the council moved to the Campus, but with the announcement in October that this move

would not happen until 2021, it was decided to purchase the copier now; therefore, there is a movement into a new reserve and a corresponding spend out of the reserve.

It was agreed some years ago that £10,000 would be added to the Precept each year to cover the shortfall of the difference between income and expenditure on the Jubilee Sports Field account. This was more like £18/20k this year and next, and was shown as a movement through the Reserve Account as a mechanism for this transaction to take place.

Legal fees have been used for the parish council's part in s106 agreements and for Farm Business Tenancies and the funds needed to be topped up. The Clerk had queried with the CIL officer if legal fees relating to the council taking on assets such as play areas qualified as eligible for CIL but had not yet received an answer.

It was unknown if the parish council would be able to stay at their current office accommodation until their eventual relocation to the Campus in 2021, and so the office relocation Reserve had an additional £1,000 added to it next year.

The community access defibrillators would need replacing in about 6/7 years and the batteries replaced in 3 years, so sums were reserved for this.

Funding was put aside for a staffing contingency in both years, now that SSP (Statutory Sick Pay) was not recoverable from HMRC. It was also noted that the parish council had some cover for key personnel in terms of hiring a temporary Locum clerk or Caretaker as a ROSPA play area inspector, but for other staff members there would need to be provision for additional hours by the other staff as a temp would probably not be the right solution.

There was a current Bowerhill Ward vacancy and the Council would be advised the following morning if an election had been called by residents, therefore a figure of £4,000 was shown as spend from that Reserve this year, with a £2,000 movement into the Election Reserve next year to start to build that fund back up again.

As CIL funding was ringfenced as it had a specific eligibility criteria and had the potential to be paid back to Wiltshire Council if not spent, then this needed to be shown as a ringfenced Reserve.

Recommended:

Reserves for major projects for 2017/18:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Photocopier replacement</i> | <i>£ 2,000</i> |
| <i>Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion Maintenance</i> | |
| <i>Annual sum to make up shortfall</i> | <i>£20,000</i> |
| <i>Defibrillator Replacement (every 6/7 years)</i> | <i>£ 2,000</i> |
| <i>Legal fees</i> | <i>£ 2,000</i> |
| <i>Staffing Contingency</i> | <i>£ 2,150</i> |
| <i>CIL ringfenced funding</i> | <i><u>£41,973.02</u></i> |
| | <i>£70,123.02</i> |

Reserves for major projects for 2018/19:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| <i>Crown Chambers/Office Relocation</i> | <i>£ 1,000</i> |
| <i>Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion Maintenance</i> | |
| <i>Annual sum to make up shortfall</i> | <i>£18,000</i> |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Defibrillator Replacement (every 6/7 yrs) | £ 2,000 |
| Defibrillator Battery Replacement (every 3 yrs) | £ 350 |
| Elections | £ 2,000 |
| Staffing Contingency | £ 2,000 |
| CIL ringfenced funding | <u>£26,524.86</u> |
| | £51,874.86 |

Spending from Reserves 2017/18:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Photocopier replacement | £ 2,000 |
| Bowerhill Youth Club – grant to Young M'sham | £ 1,000 |
| Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion Maintenance | |
| Annual sum to make up shortfall | £18,000 |
| Elections | <u>£ 4,000</u> |
| | £25,000 |

Spending from Reserves 2018/19:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Bowerhill Youth Club – grant to Young M'sham | £ 1,000 |
| Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion Maintenance | |
| Annual sum to make up shortfall | £18,000 |
| CIL ringfenced funding | <u>£52,364</u> |
| | £71,364 |

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Revised Reserves for Major Projects 2017/18 | £70,123 (was £54,150) |
| Revised Spending from Reserves 2017/18 | - <u>£25,000</u> (was £29,000) |
| Adjustment to Reserves 2017/18 | <u>£45,123</u> |
| Total Reserves at end of 2017/18 | £251,948 |

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Proposed Reserves for Major Projects 2018/19 | £51,874 |
| Proposed Spending from Reserves 2018/19 | - <u>£71,364</u> |
| Adjustment to Reserves 2018/19 | - <u>£19,489</u> |
| Total Reserves at end of 2018/19 | £232,458 |

e) CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Account:

The members agreed that the following major projects could be part or wholly funded from future CIL receipts and so at this stage did not need additional funds from the Precept to be moved into them.

- New Village Hall at Berryfield
- Shaw Village Hall & Playing Field
- New Community Centre at East of Melksham
- Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion – long term replacement of capital items
- Play Area Safety Surfacing & Equipment – long term capital replacement
- Project to develop former George Ward Playing Fields
- General Highway & Footpath/Lighting schemes
- Community Projects/Match Funding
- Contingency for replacement/renewal of council assets

It therefore made the following recommendation for the spend of confirmed CIL funding to be received in 2017/18 and 2018/19:

Recommended:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Income from CIL 2017/18: | £41,973.02 |
| Spending from CIL 2017/18: | <u>£ 0.00</u> |
| Total in CIL Reserve at end of 2017/18 | £41,973.02 |

Income from CIL 2018/19: £26,524.86

Spending from CIL 2018/19:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Contribution to CATG schemes | £5,500 |
| Flood prevention - ditch clearance (man + digger) | £1,500 |
| Flood prevention - contribution to DEFRA scheme | £5,000 |
| Grass cutting and bin emptying in play areas | £3,124 |
| Grass cutting and bin emptying in sportsfield | £7,990 |
| ROSPA play area annual inspections | £450 |
| Play area repairs and new equipment | £17,000 |
| Play area safety surfacing cleaning | £2,800 |
| To take on George Ward playing field project | £5,000 |
| To match fund £5k (50%) of Area Board grant if awarded towards footpath extension at Hornchurch Road public open space | £4,000 |
| TOTAL | £52,364 |

Total in CIL Reserve at end of 2018/19 £16,133.88

- f) **General Reserve:** It was noted that the General Reserve (carry forward figure at the end of the financial year) would be the following based on the above Income, Expenditure and Movements to/from Reserves.

General Reserve as at 31st March 2018:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Allotments | £ 3,194.45 |
| Sports Field | £ 6,480.89 |
| General Acc | <u>£10,041.48</u> |
| General Reserve | £19,716.82 |

with a monthly running cost based on the previous year of £17,600

General Reserve as at 31st March 2019

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Allotments | £ 3,601.70 |
| Sports Field | £ 9,050.89 |
| General Acc | <u>£ 7,064.23</u> |
| General Reserve | £19,716.82 |

with a monthly running cost based on the previous year of £17,225

378/17 **Precept for 2018/19:** For the forthcoming financial year 2018/19 the following

Precept calculation is made:

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Expenditure* | £248,756.66 |
| Less Income** | - <u>£ 58,664.92</u> |
| Shortfall to fulfil from Precept | £190,091.74 |

| <u>Expenditure*</u> | | <u>Income**</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Allotments | £ 1,800.00 | £ 2,207.25 |
| Sports Field | £ 25,720.00 | £ 2,300.00 |
| General | £240,725.80 | <u>£54,157.67</u> |
| Move to Reserves - | <u>£ 19,489.14</u> | |
| TOTAL | £248,756.66 | £58,664.92 |

It was noted that the Precept in the current financial year 2017/18 was £178,000 with

a taxbase of 2,535.97 which meant that there was a contribution of £70.19 for an average Band D household.

Recommendation: *The Parish Council set the Precept for 2018/19 at £190,091.74 against a taxbase of 2,535.46. A rise of £12,091.74 (6.81%) on last year's Precept. An average Band D household will contribute £74.97 for the year, and additional £4.78 (40 pence per month) on last year, which is a rise of 6.81%.*

379/17 Cllr Glover advised that it was 10.00pm and that in line with Standing Orders (3v) no meeting shall finish later than 10.00pm. **Resolved:** *The Committee suspend Standing Orders in order to consider agenda items 11a & b as urgent business but defer items 10a, b & c to another meeting.*

380/17 **Banking arrangements:**

Recommended:

1. *Payments to HMRC are to be paid by online banking as they were about to commence non acceptance of cheques imminently.*
2. *The parish council close their Lloyds Instant Access account and move the funds to their Lloyds Current account as the account was no longer used and held under £500 of funds.*

Meeting closed at 10.08 pm

Chairman, 22nd January, 2018