



Goostrey Parish Council

FINANCE COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING

Minutes for the meeting on Tuesday 7th November 2023, at 7.30pm
in the Village Hall Lounge

Present: Morris (KM) (Chairman), Rathbone (TR), Mooney (SM), O'Donoghue (IOD)

In Attendance: E Bambrook, Clerk to the Council

- 1. Declaration of Interests:** No interests were declared.
- 2. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs. Freeman and Hall.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting of 3rd October 2023:**

Resolved: *The minutes of the meeting on 3rd October 2023 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.*

4. Actions from the meeting of 3rd October:

- Village Hall Recharge Reserves amended and relevant invoices requested from Cheshire East Council and they have confirmed that they will raise the invoices. CEC have also asked for further information on the queries the Parish Council have raised about years 2021/22 and 2022/23. The Clerk has confirmed that she is working on this and will make a full report as soon as possible. In the meantime, it will be necessary to transfer funds to cover the total recharge payment of £12,285.47 from the council's NS&I account which requires 30 days notice into the council's current account.

Resolved: The Finance Committee resolved that funds to cover the total recharge payment of £12,285.47 should be transferred from the council's NS&I account to the current account in order to make payment.

- Internal Auditor appointed for 2023/24. JDH Business Services has been engaged.

- 5. Budget Planning 2024/25:** The committee scrutinised the reports provided by the Clerk and the budgets proposed by the council's committees. The budget for the Parish Council cost centre was updated and the draft budget is recommended to council for approval. **See Appendix 1 on page 3.**
- 6. 3 Year Budget Planning:** The committee examined the proposed 3 year budgets from the committees and agreed the 3 year budget for the Parish Council Cost Centre. The updated draft 3 year budget plan can be viewed in **Appendix 2 on page 13**, and is recommended to council for approval.
- 7. Minor Items and Items for the Next Agenda:** The Royal British Legion have provided a wreath for the council to lay on Remembrance Sunday. The Finance Committee approved a donation of £50 and recommended this to council.
- 8. Next meeting:** Tuesday 30th January 2024. This meeting will be later than usual due to the Christmas/New Year period and clashes with other meetings.
- 9. The meeting closed at 10pm**

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Draft Budget Summary 2024 - 2025

Cost Centre	2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		Budget Variance	
	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments
Parish Council	51,030.00	32,395.00	53,081.00	34,295.00	4.02%	5.87%
Amenities	1,000.00	10,150.00	1,050.00	10,350.00	5.00%	1.97%
Village Hall	17,675.00	27,160.00	18,485.00	27,971.00	4.58%	2.99%
Totals	69,705.00	69,705.00	72,616.00	72,616.00		

The budget gives costs for the financial year 2023-2024 to date and estimated costs for 2024-2025. While clearly there are some estimated costs to which the Parish Council is committed, other figures are suggestions, and are equally open to increase, decrease or elimination.

Surplus/Deficit 0.00

In order to balance the budget the Precept requirement is 52,581.00
 this is an increase of 3.75% 2024-2025 for Council incl. Tax Base inc.
 this is an increase of 3.18% 2024-2025 for Households
 if £ 1.49 2024-2025 for Band D Households

Goostrey Parish Council Detailed Budget Summary

Parish Council	Last Year 2022-2023				Current Year 2023-2024				Next Year 2024-2025		Notes	
	Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments		
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget		
1 Precept	48,142.00	48,142.00			50,680.00	50,680.00			52,581.00		3.75%	An initial 5% increase was based on the projections of the 3 year budget plan. Inflation is currently running at approx. 6.7%.
8 Bank Interest	400.00	1,680.66			350.00				500.00		42.86%	
10 Exceptional Income												
11 Audit			750.00	637.50			775.00	375.00		750.00	-3.23%	Internal and external audit will be £690 in 23/24 which is an increase of 5% for the external and 11% for the internal audit. Using the same increase for 24/25 makes a total of £747
12 Bank Charge			445.00	365.93			450.00	188.00		450.00	0.00%	Bankline fees haven't increased although the total will fluctuate depending on the number of payments made.
13 Computer			300.00	202.18			330.00	281.49		330.00	0.00%	MS Licence, email hosting, cloud storage. No virus protection required until May 2025.
14 Telephone and Broadband			790.00	649.06			800.00	300.00		800.00	0.00%	Costs projected to be £690 in 23/24
15 Website			400.00	390.00			420.00	390.00		420.00	0.00%	Website and domain name. A budget of £420 would allow for a 6% plus increase on this year's actual costs.
16 Office Supplies, Printing & Postage		63.41	1,200.00	1,820.55			250.00	70.11		260.00	4.00%	Current costs for this budget arerunning at approx. £205. This is an updated figure for costs paid after this report was produced.

17 Insurance	800.00	1,005.22	1,200.00		900.00	-25.00%	The PC has a 3 year Long Term Agreement with Zurich. The cost of the policy for the first year was £817.38. An LTA means you are provided with a fixed amount of discount, rather than a set premium for the duration of the policy. The premium will increase slightly each year in line with general rise in costs. Consider budgeting £900 for the second year of the agreement.
18 Legal and Professional Fees		237.65	100.00	7.00	0.00	-100.00%	No expenses anticipated therefore any unforeseen costs can be paid using reserves. Any costs associated with larger projects should be costed into the project.
19 Subs	1,200.00	594.50	600.00	140.00	600.00	0.00%	Maintained assuming that council does not wish to reinstate ChALC membership.
20 Councillors/General Expenses	100.00		100.00		75.00	-25.00%	Suggest reducing budget as expenses should be kept to a minimum and purchases made through the Clerk where possible.
21 Accounting System	400.00	633.60	420.00		380.00	-9.52%	Awaiting confirmation of any increase. There was a 20% increase last year to £345.60. Should there be a similar increase this year it would be £414.72 although this is not anticipated.
22 Parish Magazine	280.00	250.00	280.00	250.00	280.00	0.00%	The subscription has remained the same since 2017/2018
23 General							
24 Grant Funding	4,350.00	1,675.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	Current balance of Grants and Donations reserve is £1,734.01, accounting for the approved grant payment of £1,800 for the PO service. The committee decided that the Grants and Donations budget should be set at £3,000 for 2024/25 but should be funded from reserves as was the case for 2023/24.
25 Clerk's Expenses	100.00				50.00		For general expenses such as mileage not associated with a cost code

26 Clerk's Salary	16,717.64	15,269.52	21,005.00	11,428.28	23,380.00	11.31%	Estimated amount for the 24/25 Local Government Pay Agreement plus a possible performance based increase of 1 SCP. The high percentage increase in the budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is due to the fact that the council awarded an unbudgeted performance based increase of 1 SCP in 23/24. The actual projected budget increase is much lower than 11.31%
27 Employers NIC	417.94	757.49	1,590.00	826.62	1,901.00	19.56%	Estimated amount for the 24/25 Local Government Pay Agreement plus a possible performance based increase of 1 SCP. The high percentage increase in the budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is due to the fact that the council awarded an unbudgeted performance based increase of 1 SCP in 23/24. The actual projected budget increase is much lower than that shown.
28 Training	1,000.00	5.00	500.00	45.00	500.00	0.00%	The Clerk is the only person using this budget which is important to maintain as training is essential for LCAS re-accreditation. Consider maintaining at £500 but councillors must also undertake training.
32 Rose Day Stand and Toilets	750.00	438.49	825.00	552.50	750.00	-9.09%	Cost last year was £585 incl. vat which was discounted from £670. Suggest budgeting £750 to cover toilet hire and stand or advert.
35 Christmas Lights (Bogbean)	900.00	650.00	650.00		100.00	-84.62%	Scouts no longer running this event. Consider reducing to £100 (£50 for St. Luke's Christmas Lights and £50 for the electricity for the lights on the Bogbean).
47 Employee							
48 Employee Income Tax							
54 Recruitmen							
55 PC EES Pension							

56 PC ERS Pension			1,500.00	749.83			1,100.00	573.32	1,169.00	6.27%	<p>Estimated amount for the 24/25 Local Government Pay Agreement plus a possible performance based increase of 1 SCP. The high percentage increase in the budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is due to the fact that the council awarded an unbudgeted performance based increase of 1 SCP in 23/24.</p> <p>Includes printing, distribution and postage for 4 issues per year.</p>
64 Newsletter				1,338.00			1,000.00	367.71	1,200.00	20.00%	
TOTAL	48,542.00	49,886.07	32,400.58	27,669.71	51,030.00	50,680.00	32,395.00	15,795.03	53,081.00	34,295.00	

Goostrey Parish Council Detailed Budget Summary

2 Amenities		Current Year 2023-2024				Next Year 2024-2025				Notes
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget		Budget		
29	Village Maintenance			4,000.00	3,402.50			4,500.00	12.50%	SLA for 2023/24 was £6,765. NTC honoured our quote which excluded a 2% increase therefore an increase for cost codes 29 and 30 was agreed to reflect this.
30	Graveyard Maintenance			2,500.00	430.00			2,600.00	4.00%	The budgets for codes 29 and 30 have been reversed to better reflect costs. This distorts the percentages.
31	Lengthsman Service			500.00	160.00			250.00	-50.00%	Reduced in line with expected expenditure.
33	Speedwatch/SIDs			800.00				800.00	0.00%	Budget line maintained at £800 to cover Speedwatch and maintenance of SIDs.
34	Seniors Lunch	1,000.00		1,850.00		1,050.00	12.50%	1,950.00	5.41%	Receipts budget assumes a ticket price of £10.50 which would be an increase of £1 on 2023/24. Catering costs increased by £1 to £16 per head in 2023/24.
36	Planters and Plants			500.00	80.00			250.00	-50.00%	Reduced in line with expected expenditure.
TOTAL		1,000.00	0.00	10,150.00	4,072.50	1,050.00	5.00%	10,350.00	1.97%	

Reserves

- * The Committee recommends that £1,000 is set aside in reserves as support for a future Christmas Lights Switch on event.
- * The Committee recommends that £1,000 is set aside in reserves to support D-Day event/s

Goostrey Parish Council Detailed Budget Summary

3 Village Hall		Current Year 2023-2024				Next Year 2024-2025			Notes
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments		
Co Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget		Budget		
2 VH Lettings - Hall	6,000.00	3,581.50			6,300.00	5.00%			Hire fees were last increased in April 2022. Costs are increasing and inflation is running at about 6%. Hire fees should be reviewed bearing in mind that any deficit will need to be addressed either via an increase in fees, an increase in the precept or use of reserves. Using reserves is not a recommended option. The Committee agreed to maintain hire fees at the current level by careful control of costs and budgeting for the recharge, plus a push to increase income.
3 VH Lettings - Lounge	10,000.00	3,530.25			10,500.00	5.00%			
4 VH Lettings - Committee	300.00	44.80			300.00	0.00%			
5 VH Lettings - School Kitchen	125.00	50.00	125.00	150.00	125.00	0.00%	125.00	0.00%	Collected by GPC & paid to school
6 VH Lettings - Caretaker Servs	1,200.00	780.00			1,260.00	5.00%			
9 VH - Lettings early/late fees	50.00				0.00	-100.00%			It was agreed that this budget should be removed as it isn't a target to reach and should be considered as exceptional income if there are any receipts.
37 VH Recharge			11,000.00				11,550.00	5.00%	CEC stated that the recharge for 2022/23 is £13,639.39. The council is unable to reconcile this figure as copy invoices have not been provided for all of the charges and the electricity bills have not been apportioned correctly this would reduce the recharge figure much closer to the council's budgeted estimate, even allowing for the large increase in the price of fuel oil. It is therefore recommended to set the budgeted recharge figure at £11,550 in 2024-25.*
38 VH Improvements			1,150.00				1,210.00	5.22%	

39 Performing Rights Licence	200.00	142.79		200.00	0.00%	It was agreed to leave this budget line the same as last year which still allows for an increase in events and therefore an increase in the fee.
40 Maintenance & Supplies	2,300.00	340.00		2,415.00	5.00%	Includes costs for servicing the Paxton/CCTV system, PAT testing, cleaning of the lounge floor and chairs, servicing of the roller door in the Lounge and the potential servicing/refilling costs of new soap dispensers. Non Recharge items are also included such as contributions towards gritting and Grounds Maintenance.
42 Advertising / Entertainment	525.00	13.09		250.00	-52.38%	It was agreed to reduce this budget as it is not being fully used.
44 VH Clerk Salary	1,775.00	794.60		1,834.00	3.32%	Estimated amount for the 24/25 Local Government Pay Agreement plus a possible performance based increase of 1 SCP.
46 VH Staff Expenses						
58						
59 VH EES Pension						
67						
	17,675.00	7,986.55	4,608.28	18,485.00	4.58%	27,971.00
					2.99%	The draft budget seeks to maintain the support required from the precept below £10,000 by controlling costs and increasing income from hire of the Village Hall.

* Due to the administrative issues with the recharge, accurate budgeting is extremely difficult, however, the council's prudent financial planning means that reserves are available to address this if necessary.

Goostrey Parish Council
Reserves Balance
2023-2024

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>OpeningBalance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>CurrentBalance</u>
Capital					
Village Hall Projects	8,800.00				8,800.00
Village Projects	11,400.00				11,400.00
Capital General	4,606.00				4,606.00
Village Entrances Project	4,363.36				4,363.36
Total Capital	29,169.36				29,169.36
Earmarked					
¹ Operating Reserves	69,680.00	-24,068.00			45,612.00
² Village Hall Recharge 2018-2019	2,767.00	0.01			2,767.01
Village Hall Recharge 2019-2020	13,000.00	-4,128.30			8,871.70
Village Hall Recharge 2020-2021	13,000.00	-12,353.24			646.76
Election Fee	7,000.00				7,000.00
³ Village Hall Floor Refurbishment	2,000.00	-2,000.00			0.00
Neighbourhood Plan Review	12,000.00				12,000.00
⁴ Unallocated General Reserve	157.28	38,643.43			38,800.71
Connected Communities Fund	43.00				43.00
Christmas Lights for the Bogbean	1,626.92	3,500.00	3,119.97		2,006.95
⁵ Village Hall Recharge 2021-2022	13,000.00				13,000.00
⁶ Village Hall Recharge 2022-2023	10,000.00	3,639.39			13,639.39
Grants & Donations 2023-2024	7,006.81	-1,800.00	3,472.80		1,734.01
Village Hall Laptop		1,000.00			1,000.00
Defibrillator Supplies		1,000.00			1,000.00
⁷ Approved Grant		1,800.00			1,800.00
⁸ Grants & Donations 2024-2025		3,000.00			3,000.00
⁹ D-Day Events 2024		1,000.00			1,000.00
¹⁰ Christmas Lights Switch On event 2024		1,000.00			1,000.00
Total Earmarked	151,281.01	10,233.29	6,592.77		154,921.53
TOTAL RESERVE	180,450.37	10,233.29	6,592.77		184,090.89
¹¹ GENERAL FUND					33,179.85
TOTAL FUNDS					217,270.74

Notes to the Reserves Balance Reports

1. This reserve had previously been set to be one year's precept plus the projected income from the Village Hall for the next year. The inclusion of the projected Village Hall income in March 2021 may have been the result of concerns about the impact of Covid lockdowns. The impact of closures due to the pandemic was softened by government grants and the risk of closure of the Village Hall has significantly reduced. The Finance Committee agreed therefore that maintaining the reserve at such a high level is excessive and has the effect of inflating the budget. Legislation doesn't require a council to hold any specific level of reserves, however, the recommendation is between 3 – 12 months. It is generally accepted that the smaller the council, the closer the figure should be to 12 months net revenue expenditure, the larger the council the nearer to 3 months. The level of reserves required should be reviewed regularly.
The Finance Committee agreed to set this reserve to 90% of the precept only
2. The Village Hall Recharges for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 have now been reduced to the figures quoted by CEC which has released funds, some of which have been used to cover deficits in other years. The invoice for these recharges is now expected and should be paid by the end of the financial year. This totals £12,285.47.
3. This reserve has been removed as there are funds in the Village Hall Capital Projects to be used as a contribution towards the renovation of the hall floor plus funds in the Village Hall budget.
4. The Unallocated General Reserve now contains the total funds which haven't yet been allocated to a specific project or otherwise accounted for.
5. The actual figure quoted by CEC for this recharge is £7,077.16 so it is likely that this reserve will be reduced. Due administration issues at CEC the PC disputes this figure and is in the process of addressing this.
6. This reserve has been increased to match the figure quoted by CEC for the Village Hall Recharge 2022/23. Due administration issues at CEC the PC disputes this figure and is in the process of addressing this.
7. £1,800 has been transferred from the Grants and Donations reserve for 2023/24 as a grant towards Post Office services at the Methodist Church has been approved but will only be paid on receipt of an invoice for architect's fees.
8. The Finance Committee agreed to take the Grants and Donations budget from reserves again this year and so a reserve of £3,000 has been established for Grants and Donations in 2024/25.
9. The Finance Committee agreed to set aside £1,000 to support D-Day events in 2024.
10. The Finance Committee agreed to set aside £1,000 to support or run a Christmas Lights Switch On event in 2024.
11. The General Fund now reflects the approximate budget spend for 2023/24 plus a smaller contingency of £2,000.

PARISH PRECEPT AND TAXBASE ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024/25

DEADLINE – FRIDAY 12th JANUARY 2023

Cheshire East Council is due to fix its Taxbase for the financial year 2024/25 by Resolution of the Council on the 13th December 2023. The taxbase for Goostrey Parish Council area is likely to be £1088.46 compared to a current amount of £1082.49. As an indication, if the current Band D Council Tax (of £46.82) remained the same, this would increase the precept from £50,680 to £50,962. Alternatively, if the precept remained at £50,680, then Band D Council Tax would reduce to £46.56 when using the new taxbase. An adjustment factor of 99.00% is already included to calculate the taxbase figure to allow for potential losses on collection.

<u>Inputs</u>	
1088.46	Tax Base
52,581.00	Precept Requirement (£)

Band	DIS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ratio	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
Precept	26.84	32.21	37.57	42.94	48.31	59.04	69.78	80.51	96.62

Appendix 2

Goostrey Parish Council Draft 3 Year Budget

Parish Council	2024-2025		2025-2026		2026-2027		Notes
	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	
1 Precept	52,581.00		55,210.00		57,970.00		The Finance Committee agreed a 5% increase year on year for the Parish Council Cost Centre as a whole, apart from non-inflationary budget lines and those with known costs.
8 Bank Interest	500.00		500.00		500.00		
10 Exceptional Income							
11 Audit		750.00		790.00		830.00	
12 Bank Charge		450.00		450.00		450.00	
13 Computer		330.00		347.00		365.00	
14 Telephone and Broadband		800.00		840.00		882.00	
15 Website		420.00		440.00		460.00	
16 Office Supplies, Printing & Postage		260.00		270.00		280.00	
17 Insurance		900.00		945.00		990.00	Final year of the LTA is 2025/26. Increases assume there are no material changes in cover required and no claims made.
18 Legal and Professional Fees		0.00		0.00		0.00	
19 Subscriptions		600.00		630.00		660.00	
20 Councillors/General Expenses		75.00		75.00		75.00	
21 Accounting System		380.00		400.00		420.00	
22 Parish Magazine		280.00		280.00		280.00	
23 General							

24 Grant Funding	0.00		0.00		3,000.00		Grants and Donations have been funded from an agreed reserve in 2023/24 and 24/25. The level of reserves available will determine whether this can continue into 2026/27 therefore a notional £3,000 budget has been included here.
25 Clerk's Expenses							
26 Clerk's Salary	23,380.00		24,549.00		25,777.00		
27 Employers NIC	1,901.00		1,996.00		2,096.00		
28 Training	500.00		525.00		550.00		
32 Rose Day Stand and Toilets	750.00		790.00		830.00		
35 Christmas Lights (Bogbean)	100.00		100.00		100.00		
47 Employee NIC							
48 Employee Income Tax							
54 Recruitment Costs							
55 PC EES Pension							
56 PC ERS Pension	1,169.00		1,228.00		1,290.00		
64 Newsletter	1,200.00		1,260.00		1,325.00		
SUB TOTAL	53,081.00	34,295.00	55,710.00	35,915.00	58,470.00	40,660.00	

2024-2025

2025-2026

2026-2027

Amenities	2024-2025		2025-2026		2026-2027		
	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	Receipts	Payments	
29 Village Maintenance		4,500.00		4,950.00		5,445.00	Cost codes 29 & 30 may need to be increased in future years if additional maintenance of green areas is required following the CEC review.
30 Graveyard Maintenance		2,600.00		2,860.00		3,146.00	
31 Lengthsman Service		250.00		300.00		350.00	
33 Speedwatch/SIDs		800.00		800.00		800.00	
34 Seniors Lunch	1,050.00	1,950.00	1,150.00	2,050.00	1,250.00	2,150.00	
36 Planters and Plants		250.00		300.00		350.00	
xx Christmas Lights Switch on Event				650.00		685.00	A new budget line may be required from 2025/26 onwards to run or support a new annual Christmas Lights Switch On event plus ongoing maintenance of lights.

SUB TOTAL 1,050.00 10,350.00 1,150.00 11,910.00 1,250.00 12,926.00

Village Hall

2024-2025

2025-2026

2026-2027

Receipts Payments Receipts Payments Receipts Payments

2	VH Lettings - Hall	6,300.00		6,500.00		8,000.00	
3	VH Lettings - Lounge	10,500.00		10,200.00		10,200.00	
4	VH Lettings - Committee	300.00		300.00		300.00	
5	VH Lettings - School Kitchen	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00
6	VH Lettings - Caretaker Servs	1,260.00		1,325.00		1,340.00	
9	VH - Lettings early/late fees	0.00		0.00		0.00	
37	VH Recharge		11,550.00		12,150.00		12,750.00
38	VH Improvements		1,210.00		1,150.00		1,207.00
39	Performing Rights Licence		200.00		220.00		220.00
40	VH Gen Maintenance & Supplies		2,415.00		2,500.00		2,625.00
42	VH Advertising/Entertainment Budget		250.00		250.00		250.00
43	[REDACTED]						
44	VH Clerk Salary		1,834.00		1,926.00		2,022.00

At the budget review for 2025-2026 the committee will have to consider increasing Village Hall hire fees in 2025/26 to address the gap between income and expenditure and the amount of support required from the precept.

As hourly pay increases, the level of pay for caretaker services will need to be considered as the two rates will get closer if this rate remains static. Consideration will also need to be given to the proportion of onward costs which are built into this charge to ensure that they continue to cover costs.

This gradual increase seeks to smooth the recharge budget line to avoid large fluctuations, such as those caused by changes in energy costs, and therefore potentially unnecessary budget increases. Careful reviews will be needed to ensure that sufficient reserves are available to cover any large increases and to make appropriate changes to future budgets.

46 VH Staff Expenses

57 [REDACTED]

58 [REDACTED]

59 VHEES Pension

67 [REDACTED]

SUB TOTAL	18,485.00	27,971.00	47,676.00	29,226.00	19,965.00	30,605.00
TOTAL	72,616.00	72,616.00	48,826.00	77,051.00	79,685.00	43,531.00