

**Little Chalfont Parish Council
Council Meeting 10 May 2013
Report on the Accounts 2012/13**

Item 8

(At the time of preparation, the accounts are unaudited)

Income

Total Income £252,939 (2011/12 £235,587)

The majority of the Parish Council's income is derived from the annual precept requirement which is put to Chiltern District Council before 1 March in the preceding financial year. The precept is paid in two instalments (April and September) and for 2012/13 Parish Councillors agreed to hold the precept at the previous year's level, £208,433.

Money is also earned via hall hire charges, pavilion hire, tennis charges and pitch hire for cricket and football. Over the year football income and hall hire income combined have been £5,424 over budget which is pleasing. The dreadful weather over the summer led to the cancellation of many cricket matches with a resultant reduction in budgeted income of £789 (total actual cricket income £1,611).

Interest from investments has understandably been low over recent years. Nonetheless £4,315 was earned in the year. The Council continues to follow the investment strategy agreed at its 14 March 2012 meeting which is in line with guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Grants received totalled £10,210. £7,000 was donated by the Chalfonts Local Area Forum and was used to install a second football and basket ball goal end in the Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) at Westwood Park. A further £3,000 was donated by the LAF as a contribution towards recent work on the access to the Nature Park. The remaining monies were very generously donated by members of the public.

Expenditure

Total Expenditure £186,514 (2011/12 £265,657)

Main areas of expenditure are repairs and maintenance, grounds maintenance, salaries, street lighting, utilities and special projects.

As in previous years repairs and maintenance to the Council's rather aged buildings is a never ending task. The Council endeavours to make sure that the facilities it provides are clean, tidy, warm and comfortable. At Westwood Park pavilion a new central heating boiler and hot water tank were installed arising from a legionella risk assessment inspection and report. This work has not only reduced the risk of legionella developing but has greatly improved pavilion facilities.

The tennis courts at Westwood Park were resurfaced and repainted towards the end of 2012/13. The total cost for the three courts was just over £22,000.

Routine Village Hall maintenance continued over the year. However, in view of the possibility of a new community centre being built, the Council decided at its 12 December 2012 meeting that it would not proceed with a proposal to install improved disabled toilet facilities. Until a final decision is reached on the possibility of a community centre, capital expenditure at the Village Hall will be kept to a minimum.

Grants totalling £9,370 have been paid in the year, including £6,000 to the Community Library and £1,000 to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Budget expenditure codes in the Cost Centre One Off Projects are used to save money towards anticipated capital work and other projects as well as ensuring there is a contingency fund for unexpected events. In 2012/13 £46,000 was budgeted in this way and will be transferred into the appropriate reserve as part of the year end accounting procedures.

Reserves

The Council started the year with an opening balance of £281,576 and a closing balance of £348,000 (subject to audit). At its 12 December meeting, the Council agreed to revise its ear-marked reserve categories. Therefore, in addition to general reserves, it now has a building reserve; a Westwood Park amenity reserve; an election reserve, and, a contingency reserve.

An allotment reserve may be added at the end of 2013/14 following a review of the feasibility of developing a site for the provision of allotments in Little Chalfont.

Bank Accounts/Investments

The Council's current account is with Lloyds TSB in Amersham. A further account is held with HSBC, also in Amersham. Higher interest earning accounts are with Scottish Widows Bank, Santander and The Co-operative Bank.

Budgetary Process

The budget is reviewed on an ongoing basis and expenditure reported and discussed at each Council meeting. The annual preparation of the next year's budget commences in October and the Clerk prepares a draft which is discussed with the Chairman and a nominated Councillor before presenting figures to the full Council for further detailed discussion and agreement.

Audit

The Council has an Internal Auditor (Ernest Newhouse) who examines documentation, compliance with financial procedures and the year end return; the latter is prepared for the External Auditors (Mazars). Both Auditors report back to the Council.