BRUNDALL
PARISH COUNCIL

Budget Precept 2025/26 Report

The Finance Group, of Kevin, Mike, Graham, Robin, and myself as RFO
met on the 5th December to consider the RFO's proposals for the budget precept going forward. The budget presented for consideration at the Council meeting represents what was agreed by the sub-group.

This budget has projected income and expenditure for the period to 2028 and considers the potential future growth and development of the village. However, as the future is unknown and uncertain, any significant changes will, as a matter of course, be built into future budget planning.

The group considered the budget under the following headings:

Administration

This is expenditure that is necessary for the proper function of the Parish Council. This includes the staff costs, hire of office and meeting facilities, telephone, liability insurance and such like. It also includes a small allocation for the maintenance of facilities within the village that don't fall under Land Management, as well as allocations for community grants and donations.

Some costs have been adjusted in line with expenditure over the last couple of years, and a few costs have been adjusted up in expectation of inflation plus price rises. There are a few things to note:

- We are waiting for the insurance renewal quote, the renewal date is the 21st January. We will endeavour to get a quote before the meeting but this is quite often difficult.
- A new budget has been added for a village newsletter. This is something the Recreation and Wellbeing Committee are discussing with the Church and Memorial Hall and is only in the planning stage at present but this budget is in anticipation of it going ahead sometime next year.
- The office rent is expected to rise slightly this year as BMH have increased all their other hire charges. They are also exploring the possibility of taking on the costs of the litter picking and grass cutting themselves. If this is the case they have been asked to notify us by the 12th January but if they do our grass cutting and litter picking costs should reduce therefore there should be no change to the overall budget.
- The donations and grants budgets are remaining the same.
- The Professional Fees budget has been reinstated. Although most of these costs can be reclaimed from Persimmon it is likely there will be legal fees that cannot.
- The Audit budget is reduced because the income and expenditure will be reduced next year (no Sports Hub build!).
- As per the full Council meeting in September an annual budget of £1,000 for supplies, repairs and replacement of the 4 village defibrillators was agreed.
- The staffing budget has been calculated for the Clerk at 28 hours and 2 Deputies at 18 and 14 hours respectively.

Footway Lighting

This is a non-income generating activity and comprises of the cost electricity, repairs and maintenance. We are on a fixed rate contract at present which is due to end in July 2025, therefore there has been an increase in this budget.

Projects

This budget has not been used for the last 2 years therefore the Finance Group decided the funds would be better used in other areas. All projects should, and can, be funded from other budgets.

Land Management

The Land Management budget this year is presented in combined lines rather than separated out for each area of land.

The overall budget is less than last year for 2 reasons: the Cemetery income and expenditure is separate in an earmarked reserve; and, any boardwalk repairs will be from the Asset Maintenance accrual. However the Finance Group felt this fairly represented the budget needed.

Grass Cutting

The Council undertake delegated function grass cutting of verges on behalf of Norfolk County Council. The expenditure on this is more than covered by the funding received from NCC.

An additional budget has been added for grounds maintenance at the Sports Hub and an average 5% increase has been applied to all other areas.

Cemetery Income

As agreed at the September full Council meeting, all income will go into an earmarked reserve to cover the running costs of the Cemetery and future development plans.

Traffic Management

The Council has long held ambitions to make a difference to the traffic issues in and around the village and therefore this budget line is to support traffic management solutions along The Street, including commissioning a feasibility study for a second pedestrian crossing nearer to the shops in 2025/26.

Asset Maintenance and Replacement

As mentioned earlier, there is now a separate fund put aside specifically for the maintenance, repair and replacement of all the Council's assets, including: streetlights, benches, play equipment, sheds and other infrastructure.

Allotments

This is a self-financing activity where income received through the plot fees levied adequately covers the costs of maintaining this facility. Any surplus funds remaining at the end of the year are transferred to the allotments reserve, which will provide for any future capital development needs.

Summary

The 2024/25 parish precept was increased by 6.2% to £162,530. The budget that is being presented for 2025/26 is £173,820, which represents an increase in real terms of 7.0% but, with the increase in the Council Tax base (number of dwellings in the village), will actually represent an increase of 4.9% on the Parish element of the bill or about £4.65 per Band D household for the year, or £0.39 per month.

The budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28 have been based on an expected small increase in costs over the 2 years, averaged out at about 5%, but the anticipated increase in the Council Tax base will produce a lower increase on the Parish element of the bill.

C Dickson –Clerk and RFO 10th December 2024