

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Mrs Suzanna Dry

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Monday 3rd June 2024

All members of the Parish Council are summoned to a meeting of Alfriston Parish Council to be held in the Alfriston War Memorial Hall on **Monday 10th June 2024**, this meeting will follow the Planning Committee meeting, which starts at 7.00pm.

Please note that a digital sound recording is made of all meetings of Alfriston Parish Council including Public Questions sessions. The recording is not for publication and is only used to aid accurate minute taking.

S.C. Dry

Mrs Suzanna Dry - Clerk to the Council

37. Chairman's Welcome

38. Public Questions – relating to items on the agenda.

39. Apologies for absence

40. Declaration of interest

41. Finance

41.1 Review overspend lines from end of last Financial Year

41.1 General Reserves – to discuss and review the level of general reserves
(Clerk's Report – [Appendix A](#))

41.2 Expenditure against Budget for Qtr 1 and Forecast for Qtr 2 ([Appendix B](#))

41.3 Review of Clerk's hours

41.4 Review Risk Register ([Appendix C](#))

42. Date of next meeting - Monday 17th June 2024 in the AWMH at 19:15.

ALFRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

Date: 3rd June 2024
Report Subject: Review of General Reserves
By: Suzanna Dry (Clerk & RFO)

The following are matters for decision at the APC meeting on 10th June 2024, Agenda Item No. 41.1

General Reserves – currently £10,401.00

As previously advised in my report dated 13th March, the general reserves have gone down due to the overspend on budget last financial year and this needs to be reviewed to see how we can bring the general reserves back up to an acceptable level for 2024/25.

As per the JPAG (Joint Panel of Accountability & Governance) this needs to be an absolute minimum of 3 months operating costs, which for APC, is £14,184.00. In our final audit, our internal auditor, commented on the level of general reserves as follows: ‘The General reserve balance is below the recommended range. On discussion with the clerk, the council is aware of this, I would recommend that in the budget setting for 2025/26 the council looks to increase the general reserve by allocating funds of between £4,000.00 - £5,000.00. As for the 2024/25 financial year, the council may need to review the ear marked reserves and re-allocate to general reserves.’

Recommendation:

Council to discuss this matter at the meeting on 10th June and look at where we can move £4,000.00 from earmarked reserves, into the general reserves for this financial year.

APPENDIX B

APC Quarterly YTD for 2024/25 - As of 31st May 2024						
INCOME	Actual 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	AS OF 31ST MAY (JUN costs yet to come out)	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4
Precept	55,252	56,736	28,368			
ESCC Grass Cutting	0	0	0			
Allotment Rents	505	800	20			
Donations	0	0				
Interest	447	150	74.53			
Pavilion	440	150	140.5			
Benches	0	0				
Other	381	0	17			refund from Annual meeting refreshments
Total receipts excl VAT	56,985	57,836				
VAT on receipts	0	0				
VAT refunds from HMRC	16287.34	0	603.57			
Total receipts	73,273	57,836	29,224			
EXPENDITURE	Actual 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	AS OF 31ST MAY (JUN costs yet to come out)	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4
APC Staff costs	24,520	27,500	4738			
Locum Costs			170			
Administration	1589	1200	291			
Grass Cutting (excl Willows)	5318	5500	640			
Allotments	4749	1000	256			
Pavilion	500	150	0			
Rec & Playground	438	500	0			
Bins	3898	4346	296			
Tye	290	500	0			
Village Amenity Maintenance	1269	1200	0			
Insurance	1001	1100	1092			
Jubilee Clock	946	550	310			
S137 Grants	760	800	0			
Courses & Subscriptions	1760	500	245			
Rent	523	400	136			
Bank Charges	240	240	20			
Audit	705	750	119			
Benches	0	0	0			
Election Expenses	2933	500	0			
Chairman's allowance	223	100	42			
Speedwatch	0	0	0			
CIL money	260	0	0			
Other Misc	1552	0	72			
Earmarked reserves	11000	11,000	11,000			
Total payments excl VAT	64474	57,836	19427			
VAT on payments	2340	0	399			
VAT paid to HMRC	0	0	0			
Total payments	66813	57,836	19826			
RESERVE INFORMATION FOR 2024/25						
Project	Closing balance	Budget 24/25				Opening Balance - as of 01.04.24
General Reserves	£10,401.11					£10,401.11
Tye Rd surface	£20,000.00	£5,000.00				£25,000.00
Playground	£763.07	£500.00				£1,263.07
NDP	£500.00					£500.00
High St Traffic Plan	£10,000.00	£5,000.00				£15,000.00
Election costs		£500.00				£500.00
Christmas tree						£0.00
CIL money	£762.07					£762.07
TOTAL	£42,426.25	£11,000.00				£53,426.25

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Risk Register

Reviewed and adopted at the AGM held on 20th May 2024

To be reviewed: May 2025

Finance

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you doing now?	What further action is necessary?	How will you put the assessment into action? Who When?	Review Date
Cheque & BACS payments	Council – fraud	All invoices are presented to Cllrs for authorisation for payment.	Copy of finance report and bank statement presented to a nominated councillor for review every month	Clerk email finance report and bank statement PDF to Cllrs. Clerk to present quarterly bank reconciliations at Council meetings	May 2025
Expenditure	Council – overspending	Clerk prepares & circulates draft budgets in Oct. Budget and Precept reviewed and approved by full council in January.	Report on expenditure vs budget to be presented to Councillors every quarter. Council to review budget lines against expenditure and forecasts each qtr. Water Leak – record meter readings weekly in summer months.	Clerk & Council quarterly. Clerk	May 2025
Income	Council & Clerk - fraud	Cheques paid in promptly. All income recorded in the Cashbook (ledger).	None	Councillors' quarterly audit.	May 2025
Grant Allocation	Local Groups – lack of grant aid	Local groups can apply in writing and present their case at Council meetings. Grants are	None		May 2025

		recorded in minutes.			
Auditing	Council & Clerk – incorrectly maintained accounts	Independent internal audit carried out annually. Year end accounts produced by Clerk and presented to full Council for approval with Annual Return. Annual Return sent to external auditors and on completion copies are displayed on noticeboards and website.	Councillors to conduct a quarterly internal audit. Independent internal audit to be carried out twice yearly.	Clerk to produce Councillors' audit checklist.	End of June, Sept, Dec and March
Insurance	Council – claims not met	Index linked policy and adequate cover reviewed by Clerk annually. Asset Register and Insurance schedule reviewed annually by Council.			May 2025

Children's Playground

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you doing now?	What further action is necessary?	How will you put the assessment into action? Who When?	Review Date
Safety	Users – falling, running into road.	New equipment fitted Nov 2022 with non slip safety surfaces beneath play equipment. Playground is fenced and gated.	None	Clerk & Cllr Daw reviewing this all the time.	Monthly
Equipment	Users - physical injury	Playground is inspected annually and report issued.	Weekly inspection of Playground and programme of refurbishment as per inspection report	Clerk and Cllr Daw reviewing this all the time.	Monthly
Area Clean and Tidy	Users- health risks	Litter and dog bins are provided close by and are emptied regularly. Playground is fenced to keep dogs out.	Monthly inspection [with signs saying contact Clerk if any issues seen]	Clerk and Cllr Daw reviewing this all the time.	Monthly
Trees – Tye and Recreation Ground	Users – falling trees and climbing	Tree Warden regularly checks trees	Annual tree report	Tree Warden has been asked to produce a catalogue of all trees and list maintenance required.	Annually

Clerk's Office

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you doing now?	What further action is necessary?	How will you put the assessment into action? Who When?	Review Date
Computer	Clerk – eye strain	Take regular breaks. Annual eye test	None		Annually
Computer back up	Council/Clerk – loss of records	All data backed up weekly on hard disk.	Data to be backed up on a to a compliant cloud service.	Clerk to look into re-instating one drive on APC laptop.	May 2025
Records Storage	Clerk – trip injury from lack of space		Remove old records to ESCC Records Centre	Clerk contact The Keep	May 2025
IT equipment failure	Clerk – unable to work	Up to date support contract providing loan equipment if necessary	None		May 2025
Clerk Resigns	Significant impact on the function of the Council and finances	Upholding Civility & Respect Pledge	Set up a Personnel Committee to resolve issues early	APC to agree TOR for a Personnel Committee	May 2025