



October 2026

Dear Councillors,

Initial Proposal for Budget for 2027/28

Each year we plan in detail for the various expenditure lines only to end up at year end with some lines not being expended at all and expenditure items that we did not foresee.

The latest Practitioner's Guide for 2026/27 published by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel with NALC, SLCC and ADA addresses accounts in terms of ear marked reserves assigned for different uses.

To support this, all Parish Council's should have a reserving policy which sets out the basis for our reserves:

- Why the funds have been designated.
- What the funds are intended for
- When they would be expected to be used

For example, we should hold reserves for:

- Reserves for the running of the Parish Council including Pay.
- Current and Future activities
- Training of staff and councillors
- Grants & Donations
- Management of our village assets such as the playing field and assets other than the playing field
- A contingency reserve to allow for the peaks and troughs of unexpected expenditure to be covered. The size of this contingency reserve is dependent on the size of the council but can range from 3 months to 6 months of the total expenditure of the parish council.
(in previous budgets we have set this out as 6 months non-discretionary expenditure such as salaries/tax/NI/Insurance/Audit Fees/website as well as costs associated with ensuring the playing field remains safe to use)

Each of these reserves will consist of more granular information based on some lines of expenditure we will know about, however as this exercise takes place halfway through the financial year, prediction of some expenditure is difficult to project. For example, with the retirement of Wagstaff's for the grass cutting, leaves an uncertain picture regarding the future costs of a replacement service.

In preparation for the submission of our Budget and Precept request to WDC for the next financial year beginning 1st April 2027, the review undertaken by members of the finance committee was that we should endeavour to limit the increase in precept to no more than 4% on the previous year.

As I will not be present at the October meeting to explain the proposed budget, I would just ask the Parish Council to consider that the forthcoming budget will be set around an increase not exceeding 4%. At the November meeting I will present the detailed reserves budget for the council to consider, subject the agreement of the council and once the tax base figure for next year is known we can submit the precept request to WDC.

Brian Friar
Chair of the Finance Committee