

CHADDLEWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to The Parish Council: Mr David Jennings

Telephone Number: 07827 309401

Email: chaddleworth.pc@outlook.com

MINUTES

Tuesday 14th January 2025, Chaddleworth Parish Council meeting held in Chaddleworth Village Hall, Upper End, Chaddleworth, RG20 7DY

Councillors Present: Cllr. G. Beard, Cllr. K. Brady, Cllr. P. King, Cllr. S. McAllister-Lovelock, Cllr. A. Woodroffe.

Ward Member: Cllr. Clive Hooker

Clerk: Mr D Jennings

Members of the Public: none

1. **APOLOGIES:** None (all Councillors present).
2. **COUNCIL VACANCY:** One vacancy remains and is advertised. No applications have been received.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Cllrs. G. Beard, K. Brady and P. King declared interest in future budget donations to event in Chaddleworth and The Downland Volunteer Group (Cllr. G. Beard only).
4. **MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS:** The minutes of the previous meeting held 5th November 2024 were agreed by Councillors present with one minor amendment and duly signed by Chair Cllr G. Beard.
5. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS:**
 - 5.1. Ward Member Cllr. Clive Hooker noted MP Lee Dillon had been written to by Norris Lance and had in turned noted this to West Berkshire Council.
6. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:**
 - 6.1. None.
 - 6.2. It was noted that the planning application 24/01479/HOUSE PROPOSAL: Single storey extensions; SITE: The Bungalow, Hillside Stud, Great Shefford, Hungerford RG17 7DI) was Granted 17Dec24 with caveat '*No development shall take place until details of sustainable drainage measures to manage surface water within the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*'
7. **FINANCE:**
 - 7.1. The regular Statement of Accounts since last ordinary meeting was reviewed (below).
 - 7.2. The Budget vs Expenditure for year 2024-2025 to date was reviewed (below).
 - 7.2.1. D-Day 80th: Chaddleworth Entertainments have contacted for release of funding for the held events. Supporting invoices have been requested.
 - 7.2.2. A request for a donation of £50 covering 5 years has been received from West Berkshire Heritage and circulated. The Council **unanimously agreed** to support this.
 - 7.3. The draft budget for 25/26 was reviewed (see Appendix 1) including a Reserves section, minor amendments were made and the Council then **unanimously agreed** to this and to the supporting precept figure of £15,000 for West Berkshire Council. It is noted that this is reduced from £19,000 in 24/25 and represents £75.14 for Band D properties (reduced from £95.71 24/25).
 - 7.3.1. Cllr. K. Brady commented that the renewed website might allow easy and interactive use by the local community.
 - 7.4. A draft reserves policy (see Appendix 2) was reviewed and welcomed in principle. It was agreed that this will be included for adoption in at the Council Annual Meeting.

Statement of Accounts			
Payment and Receipts 06Nov24 to-date			
Payments brought forward from previous statement	£	8,201.92	
Receipts brought forward from previous statement	£	19,000.00	
Payments			
Date	Description	Amount	Budget Area
21 Nov 24	WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT INVOICE 610266	£ 250.00	Donations
25 Nov 24	MRS ANDERSON CHADDLEWORTH PARIS	£ 20.00	Dog/Litter Waste Bins
25 Nov 24	MR DAVID JENNINGS CPC CLERK SALARY	£ 433.42	Salary
17 Dec 24	Foxes Tree Services n Son LTD Invoice 5366	£ 216.00	Village Repairs Budget
18 Dec 24	THE ALPHA XPERIENCE Inv 00013960	£ 162.75	Newsletter Printing
27 Dec 24	MRS ANDERSON CHADDLEWORTH PARIS	£ 20.00	Dog/Litter Waste Bins
27 Dec 24	MR DAVID JENNINGS CPC CLERK SALARY	£ 433.42	Salary
10 Jan 25	WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT INVOICE 614640	£ 120.80	Dog/Litter Waste Bins
10 Jan 25	Heads Farm Partnership Invoice 131	£ 235.80	Village Repairs Budget
10 Jan 25	Claire Connell Invoice 2081	£ 160.00	Audit
Total		£ 2,052.19	
Receipts			
10 Jan 25	Reserve account interest (22/23 year)	£ 6.46	Interest
10 Jan 25	Reserve account interest (23/24 year)	£ 74.44	Interest
10 Jan 25	Reserve account interest (24 year to-date)	£ 57.86	Interest
Total		£ 138.76	
Financial Position to date			
Balance carried forward 31 Mar 24	£	27,927.19	* Provisional subject to audit actions
Income for year 24-25 to date	£	19,138.76	
Less payments for year 24-25 to date	£	10,254.11	
Total	£	36,811.84	
Projected Year End 2024/2025			
Opening balance	£	27,927.19	
Add forecasted Income for year 24-25	£	19,000.00	
Less forecasted payments	£	22,329.00	
Forecasted year end balance	£	24,598.19	
David Jennings			
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer			
11 Jan 25			

Chaddleworth Parish Council				
Expenditure vs Budget 2024/2025			75%	part of year
Receipts	To Date	Budget 2024/2025	%	Delta
	£	£		
Precept	£ 19,000.00	£ 19,000.00	100%	
Bank Interest	£ 138.76			
Member Bid				
CIL funding				
Sundry				
VAT reclaim 2024/25				
Total	£ 19,138.76	£ 19,000.00	101%	£ 139
Payments	To Date	Budget 2024/2025		
	£	£		
Salaries				
Salary	£ 3,900.78	£ 5,320.00	73%	
Pension	£ -	£ -		
Sub-total	£ 3,900.78	£ 5,320.00	73%	
General Office & Administration				
Clerk Expenses	£ -	£ 780.00	0%	
Councillor Expenses	£ -	£ 50.00	0%	
Postage and Stationery	£ -	£ 100.00	0%	
Subscriptions and Training	£ 121.34	£ 400.00	30%	
Parish Insurance	£ 440.99	£ 500.00	88%	
Newsletter Printing	£ 693.35	£ 1,150.00	60%	
Hire of Halls	£ 125.00	£ 200.00	63%	
Website Hosting	£ 103.07	£ 150.00	69%	
(New Item) Website Refresh	£ -			
Audit	£ 160.00	£ 100.00	160%	
GDPR registration	£ 35.00	£ 35.00	100%	
Sub-total	£ 1,678.75	£ 3,465.00	48%	
Open Spaces				
Churchyard Maintenance	£ -	£ 200.00	0%	
Field Rents	£ -	£ 300.00	0%	
Grass Cutting & Roadside Maintenance	£ 1,720.88	£ 4,000.00	43%	
Playground Inspection	£ -	£ 100.00	0%	
Playground Repairs	£ 235.80	£ 2,000.00	12%	
Dog/Litter Waste Bins	£ 683.19	£ 650.00	105%	
Memorial Garden	£ 63.73	£ 500.00	13%	
Grit Bins	£ -	£ 300.00	0%	
Village Repairs Budget	£ 248.04	£ 1,000.00	25%	
Defibrillator	£ 92.94	£ 364.00	26%	
Sub-total	£ 3,044.58	£ 9,414.00	32%	
Donations	£ 1,630.00	£ 1,630.00	100%	
D-Day 80th	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0%	
Neighbourhood Plan	£ -	£ 1,500.00		
By Elections	£ -		New	
		£ -		
Total	£ 10,254.11	£ 22,329.00	46%	-£ 12,075
Sinking Funds	To Date	Budget		
Playground Capital Replacement Fund		£ 2,000.00	0%	
CIL	£ -	£ -		

7.4.1.

8. **CLLR. G. STANLEY MEMORIAL:** The old stump has been removed to allow space for the planting of the memorial Japanese Acer tree and the move of the bench next.
9. **PARISH PLAN:** Cllr. P. King kindly provided an update of the parish demographic profile, commented about the survey mode options between address and/or person. A steering group session before the launch is targeted – when and whom (ideally 6 to 8 people to ensure there is good representation from across the village residents and groups) to ideally to be clarified by the next meeting. The launch being with the Annual Parish Meeting and Chaddleworth Fete events is desired.
10. **MAINTENANCE:**
 - 10.1. Maintenance of the playground tunnel footings has been completed – thank you to Heads Farm Contracting for this. The replacement of the playground fence is to follow once the weather permits.
 - 10.2. The SLOW VS045 ‘slow children and animals’ sign at Upper End has been replaced.
 - 10.3. Cllr. G. Beard kindly agreed to check the grit bins to see what supplies are needed.
 - 10.4. Cllr. A. Woodroffe commented that the road verges are very poorly maintained, and the road width is reduced by the accumulation of debris at the verge. A specific places of issues to be identified – possibly an initial ‘test case’ – and a problem then to be reported to West Berkshire Council by the Clerk.
11. **THE IBEX INN AS AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE (ACV):** Letters in support of the The Ibex Inn, Chaddleworth as an asset of community value (ACV) have been received and the nomination drafted. Two further letters of support from a parish family and Chaddleworth Cricket Club have been received and one further from Reverend Mike Griffiths is expected. Cllr. K. Brady commented that the nomination might also describe past community support for The Ibex Inn and Cllr. G. Beard that it might also describe the value of employment and experience opportunities for local people. The Council **unanimously agreed** the fresh nomination being made to West Berkshire Council.
12. **COUNCILLOR’S REPORTS:**
 - 12.1. Cllr. K. Brady reported that a member of the public has requested maintenance needed to the War Memorial, kindly offered to complete a light steam clean and treatment. Some renovation to the lettering with a suitable paint is also needed. The total expense will be about £75 and the Council **unanimously agreed** to this work proceeding.
 - 12.2. Cllr. S. McAllister-Lovelock reported that the footpaths are very muddy; that the playground requires some maintenance especially bark chippings. Action: clerk to include in maintenance items.
 - 12.3. Cllr. G. Beard thanked Cllr. K. Brady for leading the Remembrance Sunday commemoration; commented that rainwater flooding had occurred at the bottom of School Hill next to Poppy Cottage and included the Ibex Inn car park and cellar.
13. **CLERK REPORT:**
 - 13.1. The completed Internal Audit for the year ended 31st March 2024 was reviewed (copy on parish website) and the actions included are noted and accepted. Specific comments to these were discussed:
 - 13.1.1. *‘Objective C Review of risk management not formally undertaken in the year’.* It is noted that, whilst commenced by a Cllr. this was unfortunately not able to be completed. This has since been completed this FY. Cllr. G. Beard kindly agreed to review the risk management next.
 - 13.1.2. *‘Objective J Incorrect basis of accounts used for the AGAR.’* As described, the RFO now understands what is required and will complete the changes as described for FY 23-4 in order to complete FY 24-25.
 - 13.1.3. *‘Objective L Lack of up-to-date publishing of information on the website; Objective M No exercise of public rights conducted; Objective N Lack of publishing of documents relating to the AGAR.’* These each and all followed from the RFO’s inexperience in completing internal Audit and AGAR. With thanks to the new internal auditor, this report correctly identifies the exceptions so that these will be avoided in FY 24-25.
14. **OTHER ACTION POINTS:** None
15. **MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION:** None
16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** the next planned Ordinary Meeting is to be held **Tuesday 4th March 2025** at 7:30pm in Chaddleworth Village Hall.

17. APPENDIX 1: 25/26 BUDGET

Chaddleworth Parish Council

Budget 2025/2026 Draft

This summary is to help set the budget. These proposals from RFO to be amended and adopted after Council consideration.

Receipts	24/25 £	25/26 £	Change?	Comments
Precept	£ 19,000.00	£ 15,000.00		Represents £75.14 for Band D (reduced from £95.71 24/25)
Bank Interest				
Member Bid				
CIL funding				
Sundry				
VAT reclaim				
Total	£ 19,000.00	£ 15,000.00	-£ 4,000.00	

Payments	24/25 £	25/26 £		Comments
Salaries				
Salary	£ 5,320.00	£ 5,400.00	£ 80.00	NLC salary rates and scale level are available for 24/25. There is likely to be a further small increase in 25/26.
Pension	£ -	£ -	£ -	Is not required by the current Clerk.
Sub-total	£ 5,320.00	£ 5,400.00	£ 80.00	
			£ -	
General Office & Administration			£ -	
Clerk Expenses	£ 780.00	£ 200.00	-£ 580.00	Reduced. Historically agreed for electricity, heating, general office costs and storage of historic files @ £780.
Councillor Expenses	£ 50.00	£ 50.00	£ -	
Postage and Stationery	£ 100.00	£ 100.00	£ -	
Subscriptions and Training	£ 400.00	£ 400.00	£ -	Includes BALC membership.
Parish Insurance	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ -	We are locked in with BHIB until 2025, this cost will only slightly increase by 'index-linked'.
Newsletter Printing	£ 1,150.00	£ 1,100.00	-£ 50.00	Slightly reduced. Allows for 10% increas and 6 editions of 24 pages.
Hire of Halls	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ -	£25 per meeting (6 x £25 + 2 further meetings)
Website Hosting	£ 150.00	£ 350.00	£ 200.00	Increased to cover .gov.uk conversion with email
Website Refresh			£ -	
Audit	£ 100.00	£ 175.00	£ 75.00	This is the internal auditor cost. CPC won't have an external audit if under £25,000 threshold of income and expenditure.
GDPR registration	£ 35.00	£ 40.00	£ 5.00	Set cost for Data Protection Registration.
Sub-total	£ 3,465.00	£ 3,115.00	-£ 350.00	

Payments	24/25	25/26		Comments
Open Spaces				
Churchyard Maintenance	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ -	
Field Rents	£ 300.00	£ 350.00	£ 50.00	Increased until 2030 as per contract.
Grass Cutting & Roadside Maintenance	£ 4,000.00	£ 3,000.00	-£ 1,000.00	Additional to cover the maintenance we have agreed to commission and to reflect reduction in WBC services.
Playground Inspection	£ 100.00	£ 110.00	£ 10.00	
Playground Repairs	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ -	Additional to cover maintenance needed following Playground Inspection Report.
Dog/Litter Waste Bins	£ 650.00	£ 750.00	£ 100.00	Increased to cover 24/25 cost and possible move from WBC to PC.
Memorial Garden	£ 500.00	£ 250.00	-£ 250.00	
Grit Bins	£ 300.00	£ 300.00	£ -	
Village Repairs Budget	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ -	
Defibrillator	£ 364.00	£ -	-£ 364.00	Not maintenance needed 24/25
Sub-total	£ 9,414.00	£ 7,960.00	-£ 1,454.00	
Donations	£ 1,630.00	£ 1,630.00	£ -	£250 Welford Associates a contribution towards the playground upkeep. £250 towards Newbury Library £150 towards the Downland Volunteer bus £900 towards the Village Hall upkeep £80 towards RBL – Poppy Wreaths
VE-Day 80th	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ -	Is equivalent amount as previously D-Day
Neighbourhood Plan	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ -	Initial budget to cover mobilisation and survey (carried from 24/25)
Asset Replacement Fund		£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	
Total	£ 22,329.00	£ 22,605.00	£ 276.00	

18. APPENDIX 2: DRAFT RESERVES POLICY

Introduction: Chaddleworth Parish Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.

Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer to advise the Council about the level of reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

Types of Reserves: Reserves can be categorised as general or earmarked. Earmarked reserves can be held for several reasons:

- Renewals – to enable services to plan and finance an effective programme of vehicle, equipment and infrastructure replacement and planned property maintenance. These reserves are a mechanism to smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement programme can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
- Carry forward of underspend - some services commit expenditure to projects, but cannot spend the budget in year. Reserves are used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources.
- Insurance reserve – to enable the Council to meet the excesses of claims not covered by insurance.
- Other earmarked reserves may be set up from time to time to meet known or predicted liabilities.
- General Reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows, offset the budget requirement if necessary or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

Earmarked Reserves: Earmarked reserves will be established on a “needs” basis, in line with anticipated requirements.

Any decision to set up a reserve must be made by the Council. Expenditure from reserves can only be authorised by the Council.

Reserves should not be held to fund on-going expenditure. This would be unsustainable as, at some point, the reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that reserves are used to meet short term funding gaps, they must be replenished in the following year. However, earmarked reserves that have been used to meet a specific liability would not need to be replenished, having served the purpose for which they were originally established.

All Earmarked Reserves are recorded on a central schedule held by the Responsible Financial Officer which lists the various Earmarked Reserves and the purpose for which they are held.

Reviewing the Council's Financial Risk Assessment is part of the budgeting and year end accounting procedures and identifies planned and unplanned expenditure items and thereby indicates an appropriate level of Reserves.

General Reserves: The level of General Reserves is a matter of judgement and so this policy does not attempt to prescribe a blanket level. The primary means of building general reserves will be through an allocation from the annual budget. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.

Setting the level of General Reserves is one of several related decisions in the formulation of the medium-term financial strategy and the annual budget. The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks it faces, as expressed in its financial risk assessment.

If in extreme circumstances General Reserves were exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures within a particular financial year, the Council would be able to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short term resources.

Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances the Council must keep a minimum balance sufficient to pay one month's salaries to staff in General Reserves at all times.

Opportunity Cost of Holding Reserves: In addition to allowing the Council to manage unforeseen financial pressures and plan for known or predicted liabilities, there is a benefit to holding reserves in terms of the interest earned on funds which are not utilised. This investment income is fed into the budget strategy.

However, there is an “opportunity cost” of holding funds in reserves, in that these funds cannot then be spent on anything else. As an example, if these funds were used to repay debt, the opportunity cost would equate to the saving on the payment of interest and the minimum revenue provision, offset by the loss of investment income on the funds. However, using reserves to pay off debt in this way would leave the Council with no funds to manage unexpected risks nor provide a mechanism to fund the planned expenditure for which the reserves were earmarked.

Given the opportunity costs of holding reserves, it is critical that reserves continue to be reviewed each year as part of the budget process to confirm that they are still required and that the level is still appropriate.

Current Level of Financial Reserves: The level of financial reserves held by the council will be agreed by the Parish Council during the discussions held regarding the setting of the budget for the next financial year.

The current level of general reserves to be held by the Council is recommended as three twelfths of the annual expense figure, i.e. to fully cover three months' expenditure.