
Report from Finance Advisory Group Chairman

Part 1: TO NOTE BUDGET PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY FULL COUNCIL WHICH RELATE TO CHRISTMAS LIGHTS PURCHASE

Following discussion of the proposal from the GP Advisory Group for the way forward for Christmas lights this part of the Finance Report addresses the requirement in the Financial Regulations (4.6) to satisfy the Council that the necessary funds are available before a contract is entered into.

When the 2022-23 budget was set for the General Purposes AG, including that to cover the management and/or replacement of the Buckden Christmas Lights the following sums were approved for use by the group without further prior approval from Full Council:

- Christmas Lights - maintenance, PAT testing and installation¹ £1,000
- Christmas Lights Reserve (earmarked)² £5,000
- Village Assets Maintenance Reserve (earmarked)³ £10,000

These sums remain available to cover the year one costs of replacing the Christmas lights as proposed by the GP Advisory Group following their consideration of all the options.

Part 2: SUPPORT FOR BUDGET MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT BY ADVISORY GROUPS

All advisory group chairmen are requested to confirm their group's budget for 2022-23, set in response to each group's proposed workplan. These budgets are available from the Clerk as our Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Groups are asked to monitor their activities and expenditure in-year against the agreed itemised and overall budget for the group, to help ensure programmes of planned work are progressed in a timely manner and expenditure incurred as planned and not delayed to near the financial year-end.

To assist with this simplified reporting on expenditure by groups is being developed.

Groups or Chairmen who want more information on monitoring and managing group budgets and/or expenditure should in the first instance discuss this with the RFO. Further assistance for Chairmen is available from the Chairman of the Finance Advisory Group.

Guidance on management of the BPC budget and arrangements for expenditure are available in the Financial Regulations, available from the BPC website. Those Regulations are under review and it would be helpful if any questions that Councillors have about the application of the Finance Regulations to budget monitoring and management by advisory groups would be gratefully received.

¹ Revenue budget 2022-23

² Signed off by Council at year-end in response to problems over Christmas 2021

³ Signed off by Council for emergency repairs and for asset replacement