
Report from Finance Advisory Group Chairman

THE ROUNDABOUT – FINANCE 2020-21

The Council had agreed to cover losses on The Roundabout due to the suspension of income then expenditure following the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions.

We now have the final accounts available for the past full financial year 2020-21 which show a net loss of £603.55. (Expenditure on printing £4,558 and Income from advertising £3,954). This reflects significant income from advertisers in December, January and February.

The 2020-21 end of year balance compares with previous years when surpluses have been made, so that The Roundabout is self-financing overall despite these exceptional circumstances. In addition, the Parish Council is given space in the print magazine free-of-charge each month.

AGAR & FINANCE END OF YEAR RECONCILIATION

The Clerk has completed the end of year reconciliation of financial transactions and has therefore prepared the information for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) circulated with the May 2021 Council meeting agenda, for Councillors to consider and then approve prior to the Accounting Statement 2020/21 for Buckden Parish Council being signed by the Chairman.

Box 7 of the Accounting Statement shows an apparently substantial difference in “Balances carried forward”: 31March2020 = £111,037 & 31March2021 = £214,598

This difference arises for two reasons. Firstly, the March 2021 total includes £49,779.63 CIL income received in October 2020 in relation to the Lucks Lane development (see box 3 “other receipts”) and secondly, Earmarked Reserves have increased to cover commitments made in 2020-21 by Council but which due to Covid-19 restrictions we have not been able to deliver in 2020-21 when the budget and Precept for that year were set (in October 2019).

Projects are protected as Earmarked Reserves where they had to be deferred from 2020-21 and/or where prior financial commitments were made, including match-funding for grants applied for and/or received. The deferred projects do not replace work that was planned for within the budget and therefore the Precept for 2021-22.

The total of Earmarked Reserves for the start of 2021-22 is £130,737, compared with the November 2020 planned value of £117,012 (a variance of £13,725). Details of the Earmarked Reserves will be shared with Finance Advisory Group members in May 2021.

General Reserves at the start of 2021-22 are 56% of Precept, in line with national guidance as, again due to Covid-19) “all other payments” (box6) were reduced in 2020-21.

CIL INCOME – LUCKS LANE

HDC has notified the Clerk that a payment of £99,559.26 has been sent to Buckden Parish Council in relation to our 15% of total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments made by the developers of the Lucks Lane site (ref 18/02485/REM). This income will be held in the BPC Nationwide savings account along with the 2020-21 CIL payment until the potential CIL-funded projects have been reviewed and updated as necessary and then prioritised.

BPC has 5 years within which to spend these funds on infrastructure to benefit residents and which also meet the national criteria for use of CIL funding.