
Report from Finance Advisory Group Chairman

Part 1: TO REVIEW THE BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR BPC IN 2022-23

The DRAFT budget includes income and expenditure proposals discussed in detail by the members of the Buckden Parish Council (BPC) Finance Advisory Group (Finance AG) on 26th October 2021. The budget and Precept¹ are required to enable BPC to operate during the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

This budget proposal is recommended for 2022-23 by the Finance AG subject to:

- Discussion at Council meeting in November 2021, and
- Information from Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) on the number of properties to be used to determine the parish Precept for a Band-D equivalent² property in Buckden

The budget must be agreed by the full Council before the Precept request can be made.

- This year the Precept request must reach HDC no later than 17th December 2021.

It is recommended by the Finance AG that the budget and Precept request is discussed in detail in November 2021, but with the final decision on the figures being made at the December meeting, by which time we expect to have received the Band-D equivalent number from HDC.

The impact of this number on the percentage increase in Precept request could then be calculated more accurately than is currently possible.

The proposed budget includes projected figures from the BPC Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Ramune Mimiene and the Chairmen of all BPC Advisory Groups/Committees in order to deliver services for business-as-usual and priority projects.

Together the various budget proposals support and enable business as usual and implementation of our Strategic Vision (Aims & Objectives) plus underpinning priorities in the Community Action Plan, aligned with the policies in the Buckden Neighbourhood Plan.

¹ Parish **Precept** is the sum requested, and if approved, collected on behalf of BPC by HDC as part of the overall Council Tax bill in March/April 2022.

- The BPC Precept in 2021-22 was approx. 6% of the Total Council Tax bill from HDC
- The Precept provides the vast majority of the income needed to run services delivered by the Parish and to support projects prioritised as part of village maintenance and improvement e.g. through the Community Action Plan and in-year consultation with residents

² HDC calculates the number of “**Band-D-equivalent**” properties in the Buckden and Diddington parish area.

- The use of the “band-D-equivalent” numbers is calculated using a formula which adjusts for the mix of Council Tax bands within the parish boundary.
- The use of calculations based on Band-D-equivalent property numbers enables a fair comparison between years and between authorities.
- In years where a relatively large number of new housing is being built the number of Band-D-equivalent properties can increase significantly. This reduces the amount of the Precept to be contributed by an individual dwelling house spreading the payment of the parish precept total over a significantly large number of properties.

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The budget proposal recommended by the Finance AG includes a small number of items which might alternatively be covered by Reserves held by BPC, and these will be highlighted to Council at the November meeting, for consideration.

The proposed 2022-23 BPC budget and Precept also depends on the matters listed in the attached Appendix (page 3) being dealt with by Advisory Groups, through their Chairmen and the Clerk, before 31st March 2021.

- These activities will utilise 2021-22 income (including Precept) or Reserves and thus will not require new funding via the Precept in 2022-23.
- Advisory Group Chairmen and members are requested to ensure that they have appropriate plans in place to complete their projects in 2021-22
- Any delays in delivery e.g. due to supplier lead times, must be made known to the Clerk and to the chairman of the Finance Advisory Group in order for appropriate steps to be taken to re-assign the budget to other priority projects or move the funding into Earmarked Reserves to be carried forward at year-end.

Councillors are asked to note that it is again proposed to retain planned income to protect BPC reserves and thus facilitate in-year previously unplanned but high-priority work to benefit the village and its residents.

- In 2021-22 the same approach to managing income other than Precept has enabled projects relating to biodiversity, allotments, and road safety
- Prioritisation of CIL-funded projects will provide in-year funding for additional outdoor facilities for young people (Zip Wire and Climbing Wall) and a substantial contribution to the improvement of the cycleway between Buckden and Hinchingsbrooke School in Huntingdon.

Information on anticipated Reserves (General and Earmarked) will be made available to Councillors before a final budget and Precept request is agreed. This will enable Councillors to ensure that these can and will be maintained at levels that meet national standards and provide for on-going efficient and effective management of all funds available to Buckden Parish Council in 2022-23.

Proposal: That the budget (as per pdf provided) is adopted, subject to review by Council at its December meeting to review final year-on-year change i.e. at a time when it is expected that HDC will have published the number of Band-D-equivalent dwellings in the Buckden and Diddington Parish that will contribute to our Precept 2022-23.



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Appendix

THE FOLLOWING PAYMENTS FROM 2021-22 PRECEPT, INCOME AND CIL ARE ASSUMED WHEN CALCULATING THE POSITION FOR 2022-23

[If the purchases cannot be completed in 2021-22 the associated funding will be included in Earmarked Reserves for 2022-23](#)

COUNCIL-AGREED PURPOSE	££ tbc	NOTES - who is responsible for delivering this work?
Allotments fencing - awaiting 2nd&3rd quotations	9,000	Allotments AG - From BPC Income 2021-22; final cost may be less - tbc
Allotment Bench with plaque	600	Allotments AG - From BPC Income 2021-22
Particulates monitor	285	Climate Change Mitigation AG Budget 2021-22
Zip Wire and Double-sided Boulderling wall	12,362	SA/DP/Clerk - ex VAT - CIL funding to be used; installation date tbc March 2022
Dog/Litter bin replacements/extras	2,000	Clerk - Identified GP priorities 2021-22; more needed - in budget in 2022-23
Notice Boards and Village sign repair	700	GP&C AG Earmarked Reserve - village maintenance
Cutting BPC trees affecting Street Lights	500	GP&C AG budget - Tree surgeons to be employed for this work
Cutting Willows on Flour Mills Bridge	600	Green Infrastructure AG Earmarked Reserve - village maintenance
Purchase of Oak Tree for Platinum jubilee	100	Green Infrastructure AG Earmarked Reserve - Purchase & Planting
Tree work identified as a priority by Tree Survey	1,000	Green Infrastructure AG Budget/ Earmarked Reserves
Biodiversity Strategy	900	Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity AG
Complete work at Hunts End	2,000	Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity AG
MVAS units for Mill Road	9,000	Highways & ST In budget - CCC and for additional units MillRd/PerryRd
Legal advice on Licence/Lease for new storage	3,000	Finance AG (chairman) - Earmarked Reserves
Assumed NON-recurrent spend Oct21 to Mar22	£42,047	To be delivered under direction of Advisory Groups