

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 6 MAY 2004

REPORT BY RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

2003/04

1. The Parish Council brought forward a balance of £40,700, of which £19,810 was held in reserve, leaving a general fund balance of £20,890. Income in the year was £140,945 and expenditure was £156,556 leaving a balance at 31 March 2004 of £25,190. Of this, £19,517 was held in reserve leaving a general fund balance of £5,672.
2. The level of Income in 2002/03 was exceptional with donations and grants of £10,960 towards the cost of the cricket practice nets purchased on behalf of Pulborough Cricket Club. Income increased by a further £7,970 (6%) in 2003/04, mainly due to a donation of £15,000 from the developer of the Five Bells for the improvement of recreation facilities. There was an increase of £10,000 (11%) in the Precept.
3. Expenditure was £29,058 (23%) higher than in the previous year. The biggest increase - £7,503 (31%) - was in wages and salaries. The increase reflected a 4% increase for all staff, additional hours for the Assistant Clerk and pension contributions for the Clerk. Election expenses accounted for £2,981 and capital spending was exceptionally high again this year. The main capital items were:

| | |
|--|---------|
| • 2 new noticeboards | £ 1,972 |
| • 4 village signs | £ 5,510 |
| • a new slide for the children's playground | £ 2,593 |
| • water heaters and ventilators for the pavilion | £17,813 |

Expenditure on recreation and open spaces accounts, including wages, accounted for 23% of the Parish Council's expenditure.
4. Despite receiving an exceptionally high level of grants during the year - £28,188 – expenditure still exceeded income by 11%.

2004/05

1. The Precept of £110,000 for the current year is £13,000 (11.5%) more than last year. This represents an increase from £44.75 to £49.69 for the average Band D household. The Parish Council regrets the need to increase the Precept but this is an inevitable result of reduced funds at the end of the year and increasing demands on resources. Once again, the increase is less than that needed to cover inflation and new activities planned during the year:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| • Inflation at 2.2% | £3,343 | • New play equipment | £5,000 |
| • Painting the Pavilion | £4,300 | • Swan Bridge project | £2,000 |
| • Village Plan | £1,000 | • MSF Floodlights | £3,000 |
| • Hanging Baskets | £1,000 | | |

If these activities proceed, the Parish Council will need to secure additional grants or economise elsewhere. In addition, the Parish Council will work with Pulborough Sports & Social Club to explore the options for much needed improvements to the sports pavilion.
2. The Parish Council will continue to scrutinise income and expenditure to identify areas where efficiency and effectiveness can be improved.



Jenny Dorling
Clerk to the Council
6 May 2004