

In last years report I initially focused on the years accounts, which I will do again. A loss of £1,079 in the 2023-2024 year has turned into a loss of £9,560 during this most recent accounting year. Initially this may seem alarming to anyone not understanding the philosophy of the council, but this is planned and within budget. With increased fixed assets of almost £19,000 (principally storage containers and Speed indication Devices) and net current assets increasing by more than £9,000 in the last year, we sit financially secure with more than £45,000 cash in the bank.

Cash reserves will take a planned hit in the next year with the imminent install of new playground equipment, following another successful TVBC grant bid by the Parish Council. Parish costs will be limited to 50% of the £34,000 supply and installation costs. This is another tangible illustration of the investment into the community at grass roots level, and I make no apologies for the analogy!

I am pleased to report that precept did increase by 15% in line with the Councils five year plan, and will of course increase again during the next financial year by the same percentage. Our spending strategy will continue to use the surplus funds given to the Parish Council, due to the Augusta Park development. The investment in community welfare and our aim to be able to cover an annual budget without extraordinary costs within the next two years precept increases.

Our vision to build a stronger and more fulfilling environment in our Parish continues.

1. Developing methods to decrease speeding and increase the safety of our community.
2. Develop an active and vibrant community where Parishioners **from all walks of life** can benefit from the inclusion in our events.
3. Develop and maintenance increase precept to at least meet the average budgeted expenditure in recent years which would not include peculiarly one-off purchases.

Drawing up and agreeing a Parish Resilience plan will be an important focus in the 2024-2025 year. It is underway and the template is drafted. The local Parish Magazine will highlight our plans in the next edition. Dave Martin, Erica Mason and myself have attended TVBC forums and visited neighbouring parishes to gain insights into what is recommended by County and Local Councils, and what will be of value to our unique community. Though not a tangible asset, this could be the most important addition to life in Smannell PC for those who live alone, rely on others or are vulnerable. I am hopeful that when complete it will allow applications of further grants aimed at Utility companies in the next year or two will benefit the parish in terms of infrastructure including power generation and local resources such as short wave radios.

I'd like to register my thanks to the members of the council and the events team associated with the Little London Playing Field for their unilateral support in the Council vision. Vibrant communities are built on volunteers involvement with, and for, parishioners. Organising events for the mental wellbeing and enjoyment of all. Yes, it is the same old faces who are hands-on but we must be thankful this number is slowly increasing. I'd also like to register my thanks to the TVBC for their generosity in granting Smannell PC a further huge sum of money in investing in our youngster's health and wellbeing.

Finally, I'd like to thank Kevin our Parish Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council and wider community for trying to keep us on the straight and narrow.

Paul Dunning

Smannell Parish Council Chair.