



Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 15th June 2023

Report of the RFO, Barton Parish Council

The year commenced with the council having 5 members and a retiring Chair and Clerk although that person would remain as RFO and be engaged in a handover period with the new clerk. At the first meeting of the PC in May three new councillors were co-opted and welcomed to the Council and assigned various roles in the working groups helping to distribute the many and varied tasks that are required by a Parish Council. A further councillor joined in July 2022.

Barton PC has the following financial assets at end of March 2023

Current Account: £ 37794

Deposit Account: £ 28604

This is obviously a healthy position but is one which requires explanation with regard to the annual audit in that the reserves are greater than twice the income from local taxation levies. The reserves contain earmarked funds of £10000 to help pay for the LHI scheme in which Barton PC made a successful bid but though work has been done no invoice has yet been issued. It is likely that more funds will be required to meet the final cost. In addition, £1000 is earmarked for biodiversity work following a grant from the Barton Gardeners. The PC is also expecting approximately £4000 to be needed relating to finalising the recreation ground leases.

The year 2022-23 also saw expenditure of £2700 on a 'special project' to save the pond and fish during and after the summer drought in accordance with a public consultation and PC resolution. Other items spent included approx. £800 on skateramp repairs laptop and printer. Finally, and with PC resolution a cross village committee was formed to organise a village jubilee day. This included the use of the PC bank facilities to receive donations and pay some bills with any surplus to be donated to the Barton Village Trust. Consequently, two cost centres were set up on the financial software and there were receipts of £5996 and payments of £3673 which were posted but in the final reconciliation with the Jubilee

committee accounts to account for some cash payments on the day a surplus of £1174 was paid to the BVCT.

Looking forward and attempting to budget effectively and secure efficient contracts the PC has renegotiated a fixed price 3-year insurance deal with BHIB and a three-year fixed street lighting contract with the SSE organisation which has a very solid renewable energy reputation.

I hope it is appreciated that The Parish Council endeavour to keep the Precept as low as possible and will not ask for an increase unless considered prudent and necessary. However, all Parish Councils are having to take account of the current cost of living and general economic situation. The PC carefully considers its budgeting to both obtain the best value, to meet the many necessary expenditure aspects and to work to secure additional grants from many sources. In this respect thanks are due to the Barton Village Charitable Trust and to SCDC for their willingness to grant aid following requests.

Budget summary to justify Precept request: January 2023

Proposed Budget

2023-24

Proposed Expenditure	£34,302
Less anticipated non-precept income	<u>£6100</u>
Shortfall	£28,202
Earmarked Reserve for Special Projects purposes solely	£5000
Budgeted deficit or surplus	<u>£1798</u>
Precept request for 2023-24	£30,000

The **recommended** precept has been retained at £30,000 for Barton to continue to create an earmarked reserve of another £5000 to contribute to the village Local Highways Initiative (LHI) bid to assist traffic management which SCDC has now approved. The £5000 may be used to contribute to an earmarked reserve for Special Projects

The Tax base for Barton 23-24 is calculated by SCDC as 393.0 and therefore a precept of £30000 will result in a charge of £6.36 per month (30000 divided by 393.0 = 76.33 pa or £6.36 month or 21p per day)

This equates to a charge the same as in 22-23

Barton Parish Council	2023/24 Band D Equivalents
Number of Properties as at October 2022	385
Actual Tax Base on 03.10.2022	414.9
Expected New Properties Chargeable for whole year	0.0
Expected New Properties Chargeable for part of the year	0.0
Less Discount under LCTS	-19.5
Less Provision for uncollectable (0.6%)	-2.3
Tax Base for the Year	393.0

Ian Minto

RFO Barton Parish Council