

**Interim Report on the Newstead Parish Council Accounts for 2017/2018**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, the Parish Council held total reserves of **£45,432** which included cash in all the accounts held by the Council. This figure is shown at the foot of the first column of the right hand side of the **Receipts and Payments Summary** attached to this report.

The second column from the left shows the amount spent from 1st April up to the end of October 2017, whilst the first column represents expenditure incurred in the first seven months of the previous year. The first column to the right shows the actual expenditure incurred over the whole of the last financial year, whilst the second column represents the budget agreed in January 2017. The final column represents a revised forecast for the year.

**Receipts**

The **precept** for 2017/2018 was received as stated at **£14,762** from Gedling Borough Council along with the Tax Support of **£2,740**. NB This latter figure is a decrease from the previous year of **£586** and is expected to be phased out entirely by the borough council by 2020.

The budget set in 2017/18 assumed no income would be received in respect of capital grants, nor has any been received.

**Cemetery and Other Areas** - Receipts from cemetery fees are wholly in respect of charges made by the Council for interment fees (there have been 2 burials so far this year), requests for headstones and pre-purchasing of plots. The majority of the income earned to date has been received for the pre purchase of plots in the new cemetery (**£2010**). The figure also includes a refund of **£50** in respect of repairs carried out on an unstable grave.

It is sufficient to advise that income from this source cannot ever be predicted and it is proposed that the forecast is left unchanged

**The VAT refund** relates to VAT reclaimed from HRMC in April 2017 covering the previous financial year. The amount of VAT reclaimed is higher than the norm as a number of capital projects were completed during the previous year. VAT incurred during this year will be reclaimed at the end of the current financial year and be received in the next financial year.

**Other income** – Other income which has been received during the current financial year, includes a refund of costs in respect of damage to the war memorial (**£629.17**), income received from RCAN re annual community levy from the wind turbine (**£1,500**) and **£560** from the Newstead Centre, which was repayment of a short term loan in respect of roof repairs required to the Youth Centre building. According I have adjusted the forecast figure to reflect these payments.

**Payments**

**Salaries** – This figure is the amount paid by the Council in respect of the Clerk. The figure is marginally higher than that paid during the same period last year and takes into account

increased payment to cover the pension deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme and the pay rise agreed last year of 4%. The revised forecast takes into account the increase agreed in September 2017 of 5%, backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> July, and additional pension contributions required. Also included are the contributions required to meet the pension deficit identified at the last valuation.

**Expenses** – This amount includes the allowance agreed for the Chair of the Council based on **£15** per month, travel costs for the Clerk and Cllrs and includes reimbursement towards broadband charges, postage, ink cartridges and other amounts claimed by the Clerk in terms of petty cash. Also included in this expenditure are training costs. This includes two courses attended by the Clerk in respect of cemetery management and data protection and a training course for new Cllrs to be attended by Cllr Hardy (**£100**).

**Stationery and office equipment** – No large items of equipment have been purchased this year nor are any anticipated. Postage and small sundry items of stationery are included under expenses. The forecast figure is based on the cost of a new printer as being the item most likely to require replacement next.

**Cemeteries and Village Maintenance** – This heading includes costs incurred so far on the grounds maintenance contract with Anthony Clarke (**£3730**) for strimming the village green, cemeteries and other areas as specified including land behind the MUGA and Station Road (Livingstone Street end), burial fees charged by Mr Clarke as and when these services are required (**£1,200**) (NB This figure also includes charges for burials undertaken in March). Further payments were made to Clarke's Cemetery Services for repairs to unstable graves of **£370**, of which **£100** has been reimbursed by plot holders, (**£70**) to remove a damaged bench on Newstead meadow and **£30** to replace the lock on the cemetery gate.

Other costs under this heading include **£780** for the cost of cutting and chain harrowing Newstead Meadow, and **£240** towards strimming brambles on Station Ave, sundries paid to the lengthsman (**£22**) for weedkiller, repairs to war memorial (**£629.17**), **£360** to water planters/hanging baskets, **£122** in respect of plants for the planters (both winter and summer planting), bunting for the 'Tour of Britain' (**£94**) and finally posters re dog fouling **£45**.

Other costs yet to be incurred under this heading include a further sum of **£630** towards final costs expected under the grounds maintenance contract; **£425** for a Christmas tree and redecoration and disposal of the same (**£200**); work on the footpath barrier next to Foundry Terrace (**£645**), payment to the Probation Trust for strimming the Old Cemetery (**£150**) plus **£100** in respect of restocking the grit bins. The forecast figure also includes a contingency of at least **£1,000** to cover any further expenditure incurred under this heading up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

**Audit/Insurance and Subscriptions** – The amounts spent under this heading include the cost of holding an internal audit (**£125**), external audit (**£200**) and insurance (**£673.34**). Subscriptions also include membership of N.A.L.C due at the end of the year.

**Room Hire** – This expenditure covers room hire costs incurred for four meetings of the Parish Council from March through to September 2017. The forecast assumes the Council will continue to meet as planned.

**Section 137/Donations** – These are grants paid to other bodies that approach the Parish Council for funding and includes a donation to the Newstead PCC towards the Summer and Christmas Fayres (**£250**), and **£50** to British Legion Poppy Appeal. A further amount of **£550** has been agreed towards the bonfire event on 10<sup>th</sup> November but this payment is not yet shown in the accounts. In anticipation that further request will be received from the Newstead Centre and Newstead PCC, I have now increase the forecast for expenditure under this heading to **£1050**.

**Capital Expenditure** – Expenditure under this heading includes all expenditure relating to the purchase of barriers for the Christmas tree (**£386**), plus **£2360** agreed towards the roof repairs required to the Youth Building (of which **£560** has now been returned).

**Other Expenses** includes the refund to Mrs Young re land registry fees (**£18**), and the cost of Local Council Review newsletter (**£17**).

### Summary

When setting the precept for 2017/2018, the Parish Council chose not to increase the precept and instead opt for a balanced budget. I am now pleased to advise that to date the income received has been greater than forecast, whilst expenditure has been slightly less than expected.

There remains unallocated funds within capital expenditure, which were earmarked towards the cost of improvement works to be undertaken on Vicarage Corner and for work on the former Coal Stocking Yards and Freckland Wood, which due to a change in the funding criteria means the Parish Council is not longer able to apply for grants towards the large scale works required in both these areas. The Council may wish to utilise these funds elsewhere, although I am mindful that in the future there may be a proposal to undertake some smaller scale improvements in the area around Vicarage Corner.

Jane Johnson

**Responsible Financial Officer for Newstead Parish Council**