

Finance and Administration Committee – 8 February 2018

Agenda Item FA1332/18 – Strategic Business Plan

Second Interim Report to Finance and Administration Committee

Introduction

The Working Group reported at the F&A committee meeting on 8 June 2017 (FA1266/17). This paper reports progress since then and proposes the way forward for discussion and approval.

Progress

Since the previous report:

- Cllrs Nigel Cole, Andrew Gallagher, Sarah Linhart, David Montague, Mark Saxon & Derek Wallington attended a CGRA meeting on 12th June 2017 and facilitated a discussion on the proposed strategic business plan
- Cllr Andrew Gallagher attended the TRD Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) Community Strategy Workshop on 14th June 2017 representing the Parish Council
- Cllr Nigel Cole published a brief update article in the “Parish Pump” Spring/Summer 2017
- Cllr Cole attended a training course (22 June 2017) delivered by HAPTC on “Action Plans and Business Plans”
- At the Council Meeting on 27 July 2017 Cllr Cole gave a brief verbal report on the Business Plan Working Party (CC1753/17).

Progress was interrupted by problems with the council’s e-mails systems and personal commitments

- The working group met again on 6th November 2017

We discussed the difficulties we had experienced in getting engagement with other groups in the local community. Also the requirement for a separate “Annual Report” by the Parish Council now that the “Parish Pump” is a briefer publication.

We therefore decided to follow a slightly different path toward a strategic business plan for the Parish Council and, rather than attempting to put together a full plan, to look at how best to describe its purposes and activity to stakeholders (residents, businesses, interested third parties, partner organisations and so on).

We resolved to prepare a document in the form of an 'Annual Report to Residents' to be published in time for the next Annual Parish Meeting in April. This we hope will engender reactions and responses from residents and then may be used as the foundation for a further document containing all the elements of a Strategic Plan.

Our first steps were to

- (i) carry out a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis
- (ii) allocate the budget expenditure on the basis of the services delivered to the community, rather than the traditional *by committee* approach

(iii) produce an outline exemplar for the report we envisaged

Subsequently Cllr Nigel Cole was invited to speak at St Oswald's parochial church council (PCC) on 20th November about the strategic business plan and engagement with the wider community.

Attachments

The two attachments to this report set out

- (i) the traditional headings for a Parish Council Annual Report (see, for example, Chorleywood Parish Council annual report 2016-17, <http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk/pdf/CW-Parish-Annual-Report-2016-17.pdf>)
- (ii) An outline for a more strategic format to the Annual Report including:
 - a. Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
 - b. Strategic objectives
 - c. Financial analysis

Recommendation(s)

- That the Parish Council notes the preliminary work done by the working group towards the 2017-18 Annual Report.
- That the Parish Council adopts the proposed approach for reporting the Council's expenditure in the Annual Report for 2017-18

Cllrs Nigel Cole & Andrew Gallagher
30th January 2018

Standard headings for an Annual Report

Cover Page

- Photographs
- Mission statement

Contents (List)

Councillors (List)

Staff (List)

Contacts, basic data

Chairman's Report

Financial summary

Committee Reports:

Finance & Administration Committee Chairman's Report

- Parish Pump
- Weston Wood
- Defibrillators

Environment & Amenity Committee Chairman's Report

- Dogs, bins, etc.
- Stones Orchard

Planning & Development Committee Chairman's Report

- Neighbourhood Plan

HR & Compliance Committee

Working Group Reports

- Land Transfer
- Council Working
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Renewal of council building
- Strategic Business Plan

Reports from Outside Representatives

- Joint Committee of Parish Councils
- Three Rivers Environmental Forum
- NHS Local Representation (Community Voice)
- PCSO's report

Attendance Record

Croxley Green Parish Council Annual Report Proposed structure for 2017-18

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Summary of the year

Chairman's report, and possibly incorporating reports from the Finance & Admin [suggested contents might include: purchase of Weston Wood, clean annual audit], Planning & Development [number of planning applications considered; objections raised, progress on Neighbourhood Plan] and Environment & Amenity [acknowledging contribution of David W-J; CPRE award for bird box trail; support for Revels, CroxFest etc] committees to be added here.

Purpose

The Parish Council's vision is to promote pride in Croxley Green by focusing on its people, community ideals, environment and the economy - Keeping Croxley Special

Achieving the purpose

Croxley Green Parish Council's purpose is to enhance the quality of life for residents in order to keep Croxley Green distinct and special. It achieves this purpose by focussing on:

- Running a professional and efficient local government
- The natural environment, ensuring that this is conserved and improved for the public good
- The provision of appropriate leisure, cultural, spiritual and play facilities for all age groups
- The safety and security of people and their property.
- Maintaining and enhancing health, education, entrepreneurial and community facilities.
- Communicating effectively with residents, visitors and other stakeholders
- The built environment, both present and future.

Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Attractive location; desirable and popular place to live. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Near London with regular public transport (if a bit slow). ○ Near accessible countryside (Green Belt & Chilterns AONB). → Rural character: The Green and Stones Orchard → Relatively large number of volunteers and voluntary groups → Popular community activities → Several well established churches → Preschool provisions → Well run primary schools → Two secondary schools (by 2018/19) → Good doctors' surgeries → Local well used library → Range of local shops and easy access to Watford and Rickmansworth shopping → Network of footpaths → Parish Council → Recreational facilities (Baldwins Lane and Barton Way) → Designated village hall → Free car park at Community Way → Four allotment sites | <p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Overloaded transport infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ excessive through traffic on A412; and ○ residential roads used as 'rat-runs' ○ school drop-off causing congestion ○ residents' multiple short local journeys ○ crowded trains especially during morning peak → Inadequate street parking for residents, visitors, trades, Internet deliveries → Pressure on other services (health, social care, education, water supply and waste water treatment, waste disposal, etc.) → Lack of suitable space for development/re-development → Lack of coherent 'village centre' potentially leading to community fragmentation → Above average house prices; lack of "affordable" housing → High proportion of older residents → Limited non retail employment opportunities in the village other than Business Park (which is accessed primarily from Watford) → Lack of community venue suitable for indoors staging of events and concerts |
| <p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Environment & Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment – reducing energy use, reducing consumption / promoting sustainable (=less) travel, managing habitat for wildlife / bio-diversity. • Community – encouraging social activities that help to reduce isolation and integrate neighbours both incomers and longer term residents. → Better use of community assets as visitor destinations (examples include CroxFest and Revels which attract outside visitors) → Taking control of community 'green' assets (Stones, The Green, Barton Way, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Hall Woods, Croxley Common Moor) to permit coordinated approach to management and prevent municipalisation → Approval of Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate control of quality and appearance of future housing developments | <p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Public policy pressures esp. housing → Over population / over development leading to loss of character, degradation of existing amenities and facilities. → Shortage of affordable housing leading to demographic and/or structural population change → Urban sprawl (Watford expansion to west) threatens loss of discrete identity → Inappropriate new development could be approved before Neighbourhood Plan passes review → Increasing house prices blocking new entrants / first time buyers |

Looking forward in the short and medium term

Administering a professional and efficient local government organisation

The announced intention of the clerk to retire at some point in the short to mid term represents a challenge to the Parish Council as the incumbent, a local resident, has significant experience in the post and of the community that the Council serves.

Meeting this challenge and ensuring an orderly transition including recruitment of a suitable skilled and qualified successor as required, when the Parish Clerk retires, will demand careful attention.

The natural environment

Objective: Procure transfer of The Green and Stones Orchard, and subsequently of Croxley Hall Woods and Croxley Common Moor, from TRDC

Appropriate leisure, cultural, spiritual and play facilities for all age groups

Proposed structure for Croxley Green Parish Council Annual Report 2017-18

Objective: Procure transfer from TRDC of the Baldwins Lane and Barton Way Recreation Grounds; then of the Barton Way, Lavrock Lane, Frankland Road and Croxley Hall Woods Allotments to protect and hold in perpetuity for the benefit of stakeholders.

Objective: Build a village centre (focused on the Library, Red Cross Centre, Community Way to Guild axis) to include Community centre, new leisure facilities, retirement/care home all Council owned and managed

The safety and security of people and their property.

Objective: Continue to fund PCSO, monitor crime levels, hold Hertfordshire Police to account for their performance

Objective: Education about and enforcement of controlled substances laws

Objective: Working with the Highways Authority to ensure street lighting maintained and CCTV installed at a suitable level to deter burglary and antisocial behaviour

Maintain and enhance health, education, entrepreneurial and community facilities.

Objective: Encourage businesses, ensure housing developments include appropriate community infrastructure

The built environment

Objective: Complete approval of the Neighbourhood Plan

Objective: Enforce affordable homes requirement for new developments

Objective: Avoid developments that encourage 'sprawl' between Rickmansworth and Watford that will threaten Croxley Green's separate existence

Team

Staff

The Council currently has four full-time employees – the Clerk to the Council, David Allison, Ryan Bennett, Administration Assistant, James Townley, Senior Ranger and Anthony Bassenger, Ranger. Additionally, the Council pays for but does not employ a Police Community Support Officer to patrol Croxley Green in addition to the PCSO funded by Herts Constabulary on the principle of buy one, get one free.

The Clerk administers the Council and must carry out all the functions required by law. He is the Parish Council's "Proper Officer" and only the Clerk can sign official documents on behalf of Council. He is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Councillors

The Council has 16 elected Members from two Wards - Dickinsons and Durrants.

Dickinsons Ward (8 Members)

Cllr David Bains
Cllr Trevor Collingwood
Cllr Dudley Edmunds (chair of E&A)
Cllr Jeremy Hollands (Vice Chairman of Council)
Cllr Jussie Kaur
Cllr Chris Mitchell (vice chair P&D)
Cllr Robert Ridley
Cllr Mark Saxon (Chairman of Council)

Durrants Ward (8 Members)

Cllr Ken Baldwin
Cllr Nigel Cole (vice chair E&A)
Cllr Andrew Gallagher (chair P&D)
Cllr Andrew Hobbs
Cllr David Montague
Cllr Cliff Vassiliou
Cllr Derek Wallington
vacancy

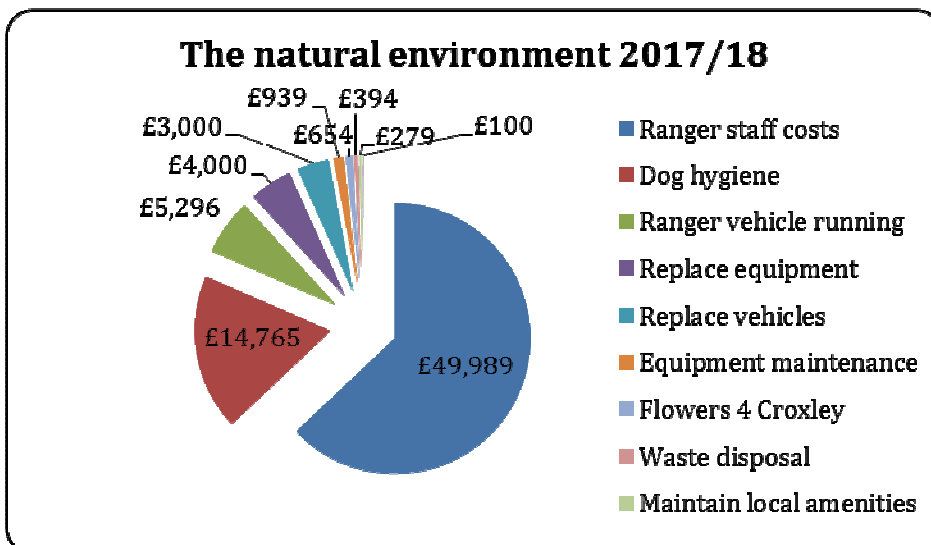
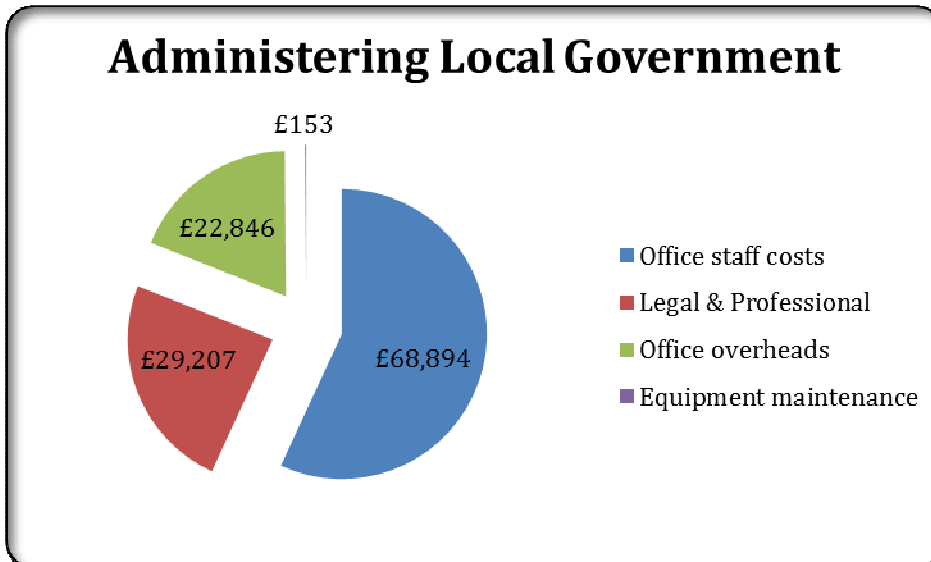
Councillors are required to abide by a Code of Conduct that sets out rules governing their behaviour, a Media Relations Policy and Social Media Policy.

Council spending 2017/18

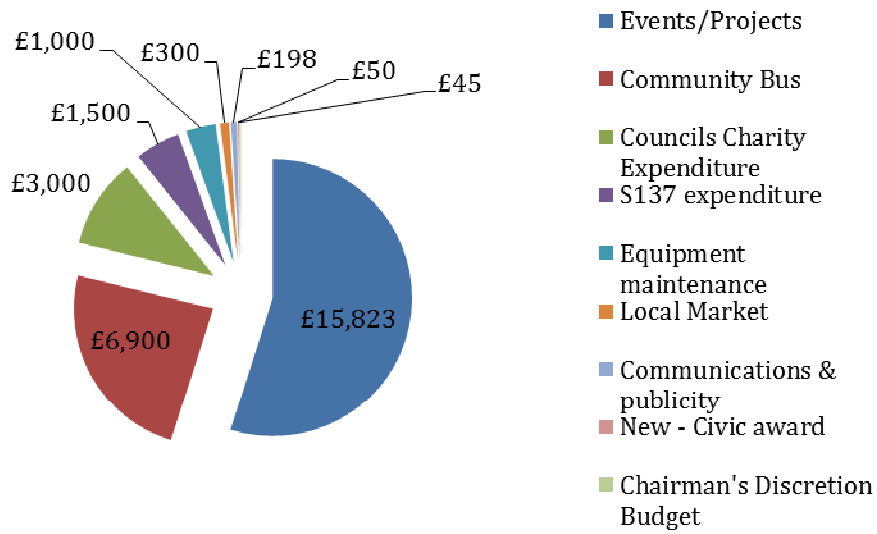
The Parish Council's annual expenditure for 2017/18 was £274,705. The total may be analysed between headings related to the life of the Parish and the services provided to residents, as follows:

| | 2017/18 Forecast |
|---|---------------------|
| Running a professional and efficient local government | £121,100 |
| The natural environment | £79,415 |
| Leisure, cultural, spiritual and play facilities for all age groups | £33,452 |
| Funding a Police Community Support Officer | £28,500 |
| Village Hall share | £9,699 |
| Communicating with stakeholders | £2,500 |
| Developing CG Neighbourhood Plan | £39 |
| Total | £274,705 |

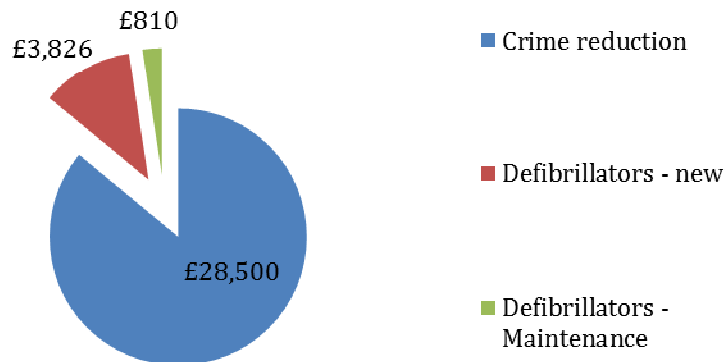
Further detail is shown in the appendix at the end of this report, and set out here as charts:



Leisure activities and events 2017/18



Safety and security 2017/18

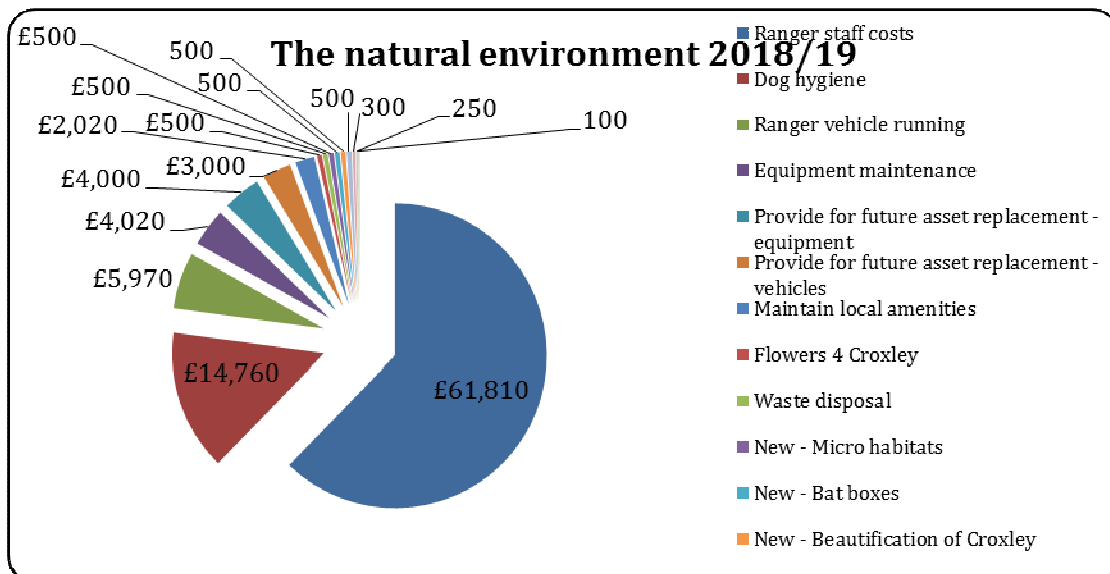
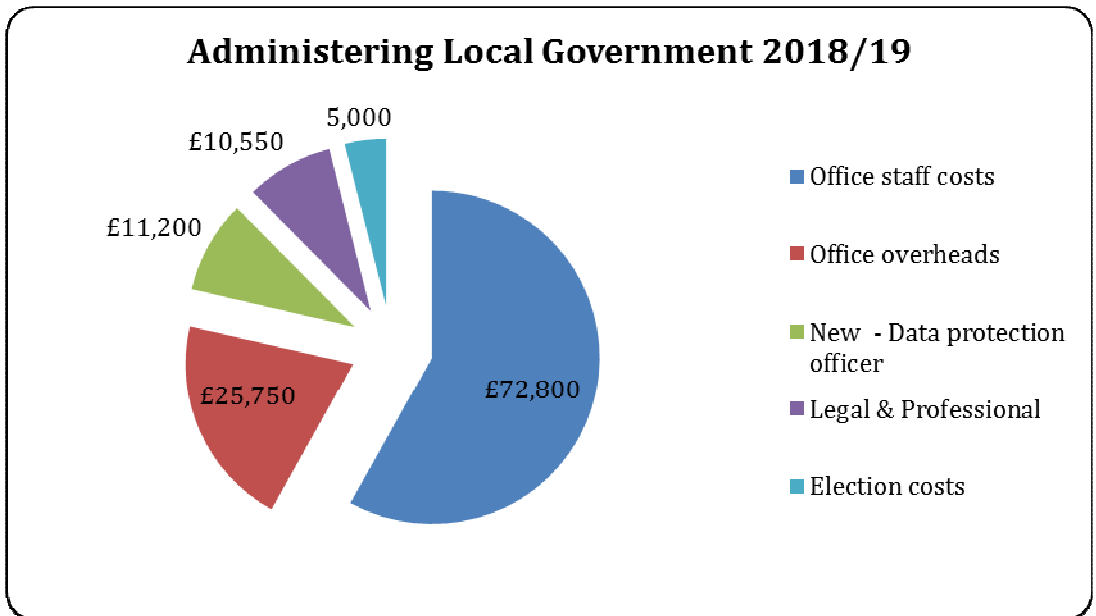


Proposed Council spending 2018/19

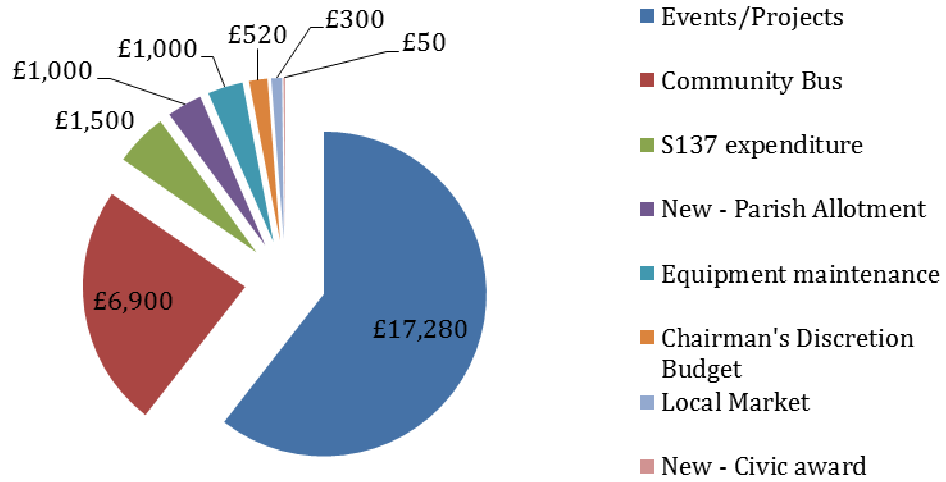
The Parish Council’s projected spending for 2018/19 is analysed between headings as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| | 2018/19 |
| | Budget |
| Running a professional and efficient local government | £125,350 |
| The natural environment | £99,230 |
| Leisure, cultural, spiritual and play facilities for all age groups | £28,550 |
| Safety and security of people and their property. | £30,500 |
| Maintaining and improving community assets | £11,700 |
| Communicating with stakeholders | £8,100 |
| Developing CG Neighbourhood Plan | £2,000 |
| Total | £305,430 |

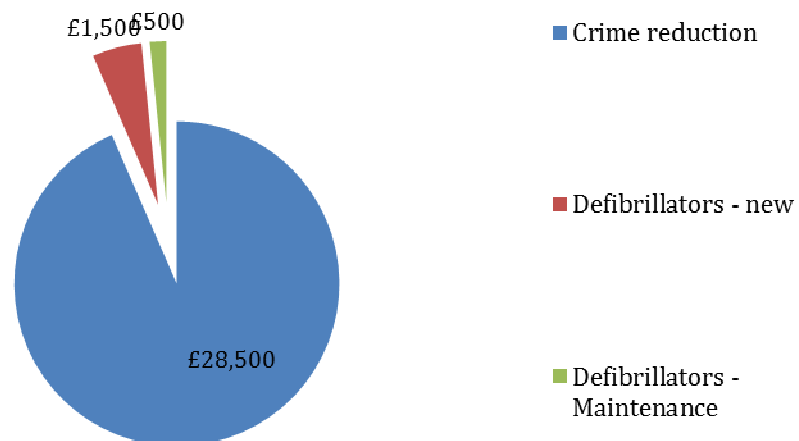
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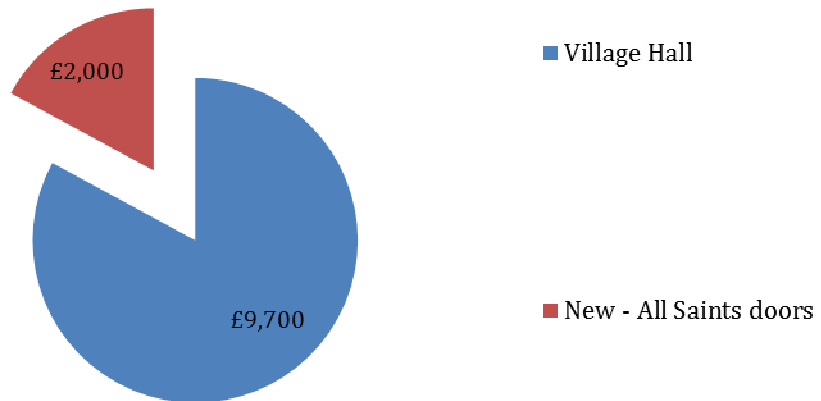
Leisure activities and events 2018/19



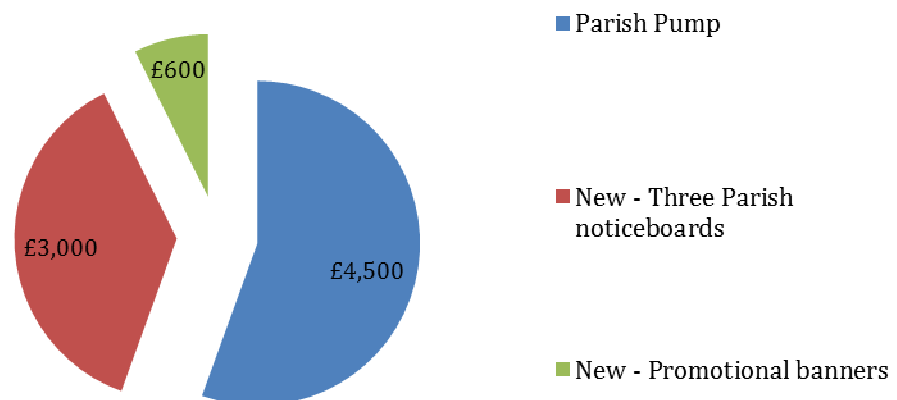
Safety and security 2018/19



Maintaining and improving community assets 2018/19



Communicating with stakeholders 2018/19



Appendix – Detail of expenditure 2017/18 Actual and 2018/19 Budget

The tables below are the bases for the pie-charts shown above.

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Running a professional and efficient local government | £121,100 | £125,350 |
| Continuing | £121,100 | £114,150 |
| Office staff costs | £68,894 | £72,800 |
| Office overheads | £22,846 | £25,750 |
| Legal & Professional (2018:incl purchase of Weston Wood) | £29,207 | £10,550 |
| Election costs | £0 | £5,000 |
| Equipment maintenance | £153 | £50 |
| New | £0 | £11,200 |
| Legal & Professional | £0 | £11,200 |
| The natural environment | £79,415 | £99,230 |
| Continuing | £79,315 | £97,180 |
| Ranger staff costs | £49,989 | £61,810 |
| Dog hygiene | £14,765 | £14,760 |
| Ranger vehicle running | £5,296 | £5,970 |
| Equipment maintenance | £939 | £4,020 |
| Provide for future asset replacement - equipment | £4,000 | £4,000 |
| Provide for future asset replacement - vehicles | £3,000 | £3,000 |
| Maintain local amenities | £959 | £2,020 |
| Flowers 4 Croxley | £654 | £500 |
| Plants, Shrubs & Trees | £0 | £500 |
| Waste disposal | £394 | £500 |
| Roads & Street Furniture | £0 | £100 |
| Events/Projects | -£680 | £0 |
| New | £100 | £2,050 |
| Bat boxes | £0 | £500 |
| Beautification of Croxley | | £500 |
| Micro habitats | £0 | £500 |
| Sunflower competition | £0 | £300 |
| Easter Egg Hunt (Stones Orchard) | | £250 |
| Events/Projects | £100 | £0 |

| | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Leisure, cultural, spiritual and play facilities for all age groups | £33,452 | £30,550 |
| Continuing | £31,454 | £27,750 |
| Events/Projects | £15,540 | £16,670 |
| Community Bus | £6,900 | £6,900 |
| Defibrillators - new | £3,826 | £1,500 |
| Equipment maintenance | £1,000 | £1,000 |
| Chairman's Discretion Budget | £45 | £520 |
| Defibrillators - Maintenance | £810 | £500 |
| Village events | £33 | £360 |
| Local Market | £300 | £300 |
| Councils Charity Expenditure | £3,000 | £0 |
| New | £1,998 | £2,800 |
| Special project expenditure | £1,500 | £1,500 |
| Parish Allotment | £0 | £1,000 |
| Events/Projects | £250 | £250 |
| Civic award | £50 | £50 |
| Communications & publicity | £198 | £0 |
| The safety and security of people and their property. | £28,500 | £28,500 |
| Continuing | £28,500 | £28,500 |
| Funding PCSO | £28,500 | £28,500 |
| Maintaining and improving community assets | £9,699 | £11,700 |
| Continuing | £9,699 | £9,700 |
| Village Hall | £9,699 | £9,700 |
| New | £0 | £2,000 |
| All Saints Church Doors | £0 | £2,000 |
| Communicating with stakeholders | £2,500 | £8,100 |
| Continuing | £2,500 | £3,500 |
| Parish Pump | £2,500 | £4,500 |
| Information Board - Stones Orchard | £0 | -£1,000 |
| New | £0 | £4,600 |
| Three Parish noticeboards | £0 | £3,000 |
| Information Board - Stones Orchard | £0 | £1,000 |
| Promotional banners | £0 | £600 |
| The built environment, both present and future. | £39 | £2,000 |
| Continuing | £39 | £2,000 |
| Neighbourhood Plan Development | £39 | £2,000 |