

Agenda item 7 – CHC Update

1. 2023/24 financial year

Cost Centre	Opening Balance	Spend	Receipts	EOY Balance
Op & Main	£19,241	£4,138	£11,787	£26,891
Imp & Dev	£4,431	£722		£3,709

- Income was above budget for both ad hoc hires and CHC run events. These have both needed considerable time and effort input from the CHC committee members to achieve.
- Spend below budget, only cost centres above budget were insurance, sewerage, and intruder alarm servicing.
- We have as planned, increased our reserves.
- This year's budget looks fine based on these full year figures.

2. Operational matters

- **Gloucester Talk** – another well attended and well received event.
- **Discounted Charging** – None.

3. CHC Formal Meeting April 2024

- Sarah re-elected as chair.
- Meeting report attached.

4. Resources

- It's been a busy year and we have been overstretched, particularly in times of holiday and sickness. We don't have sufficient capacity to run the hall as well as organise and run events.
- Most of us have been on the committee for 5 years now and have other demands on our time so we need to grow the team to ensure we can continue to operate at the high standard we have set. We need deputies who can cover and eventually replace us.
- Bob Hunt resigned from the committee in April after 5 years of putting in a lot of time and effort to make the hall the success that it is today, for which we thank him.
- To address these points, we will set up an informal 'friends of' group and seek to increase our committee to 9 people.
- We will define the skills we need to replace Bob and deputise for us and then try and recruit additional committee members
- Other village halls successfully use 'friends of' teams to supplement resource so we will learn from them and make it work for us.
- We need the Parish Council to agree to increase the size of the CHC committee to 9.

5. Insurance Renewal

- The renewal offer from Allied Westminster was for a premium of £836, a considerable increase above last year's premium of £619.
- Zurich the Parish Council's new insurers were approached but couldn't quote within the required timescales

- Community Action Suffolk were recommended, they proved very helpful and offered a policy with Hiscox for £625. The cover is comparable and excesses lower so this was our recommendation.
- Next year we can ask Zurich for a quote when the PC insurance renews.

6. Electricity Contract

- In 2021 Utility Aid came to our attention during the ACRE Village Halls week. Utility Aid claim to be the UK's leading utility broker working with 30 suppliers and the largest working in the Not-For-Profit and Charity sector, which is their primary focus and engagement. Although Utility Aid research the best energy deals under a Letter of Authority, the client makes the final choice and authorises the contractual engagement with the energy company. At the March 2021 Parish Council meeting the decision was made to work with them to ensure we enter the best electricity contract for our needs.
- At the May 2021 PC meeting the decision was made to secure a new, three-year contract with EDF wef August 2021 which was at 19.5p per kWh and 25p per day standing charge.
- Utility Aid have approached us again as we approach the end of this contract and offered us a range of deals that are available on the market. Attached is their renewal offer as of 18th April – however prices change daily.
- We therefore need the PC to decide how many years they want to fix the price for and to agree which provider to go with. Utility aid will let me know the prices on 21st May and I will update the councilors verbally with this.

7. Recharging SAM batteries

- We discussed this at our formal meeting and agreed that we can absorb the cost of doing this and the recharging can be done during the days when the hall is not in use.
- Lynda has kindly volunteered to take this on for the PC, so you need to get the batteries to her.

8. Improvements

- At our formal meeting we discussed improvements that we have identified and will start work on as resources permit.
- **Large improvements that would use our reserves**
 - Create a brick and tile extension and create more universal toilets in line with changing legislation - This is likely to cost approx. £50k. We need to start investigating grants.
 - Reduce our carbon footprint by increasing our solar panels and installing battery storage is likely to cost in the region of £15k. We need to start investigating grants.
 - Resurface car park with tarmac, lots of advantages, some disadvantages – cost likely to be prohibitive so will not be progressed.
 - Improve external lighting – for car park, shed and lawned area.
 - Replace grass with other suitable surface as its struggling in the shade of the hall and over hanging trees, particularly in the dry summers.
- **Contingency for large equipment failures as hall gets older that would use our reserves**
 - Air source heating system – now 5 years old.
 - Wooden boundary fence and posts – now 5 years old.
- **Small improvements that we have budget for this year**
 - More external tables and chairs
 - Bluetooth device to allow hirers to easily play music through our speakers
 - Coat hooks as per Margaret Harker Hall