

# **Brantham Parish Council**

## **Donations for the year ending 31 March 2025 using the General Power of Competence\***

Recipient	Reason for request	Amount Requested	Actioned	Funded Elsewhere	Minute no.
Village Hall Brantham	Purchase of new tables	£233	£233		PC 05.24.09
Manningtree & District Community Bus	Contribution towards bus costs	£500	£250		FC 05.24.06
Brantham Cricket Club	Contribution towards running costs	£500	£250		FC 06.24.05
Brantham Open Spaces Group	Purchase of leaf blower	£150	£0	£150	FC 06.24.06
Acacia Court Community Garden	Extra long hose	£100	£0	£120	FC 09.24.05

Subtotal of expenditure incurred in 2024-25 to date			£733
Donations budget for 2024-25			£3,000
Funding carried over from 2023-24			£151
Donations over/underspend for 2024-25			£2,418

\* The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and took effect in February 2012.  
At its Annual Parish Council Meeting of 10 May 2023 the Parish Council resolved that it fulfilled the eligibility criteria set by the SoS (Localism Act 2011 s8) and that it was enabled to use the General Power of Competence (GPC)

**From:** Jackie Heywood <jackie.heywood@branthamparishcouncil.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 23 October 2024 15:55  
**To:** Sarah Keys <clerk@branthamparishcouncil.gov.uk>; Assistant Clerk <assistantclerk@branthamparishcouncil.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Lesley Cherry <lesley.cherry@branthamparishcouncil.gov.uk>; Abi Edevane <abi.edevane@branthamparishcouncil.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: 25-26 Budget - PLEASE READ

Hi Sarah and Fiona,

Having met with my fellow sub-committee members, we would like consideration for some extra play equipment at the Gravel Pit Lane play area. We believe that the Merriam Close play area and the Lower Playing Field are very good as they are, especially the LPF if, at some time in the future there is to be a skate park on the site.

The equipment at GPL looks somewhat sparse in such a large area. We had three new pieces of equipment for toddlers installed a couple of years ago and that is looking really good, but there is an area beyond the swings which would benefit from the installation of one largeish item. We did think that something like a large nest swing, suitable for older children, would be appreciated.

Thinking about the GPL play area, would there ever be a chance to purchase that piece of land from the Keebles? We feel we were penalised by the conditions of the CIL scheme when we could not apply for a grant recently because we don't own the land.

Also at GPL, could we ask Dave to do some remedial work beneath the monkey bars please? There are virtually no bark chippings remaining on the ground so there is little or no safety surface. If that is to be done, we would need Dave to replace the edging around that area as new chippings would migrate out on to the grass very quickly without a little barrier.

Jackie



Paper submitted by the Clerk to the Council at the Finance Committee meeting on 27 November 2024

### **A briefing paper for Finance Committee on the Budget Preparation for 2025-26**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The budget is a key part of the Council's plans and must tie in with its policies. The Council needs to budget for a number of reasons:

- To plan its future activities
- To provide an opportunity to monitor progress during the year by comparing what it actually spends against what it plans to spend
- To assist the council in setting its precept
- To provide the framework authority for expenditure under various headings.

#### **PRECEPT – what is the precept and its legal basis**

The precept is the parish council's share of the council tax. The precept demand goes to the billing authority. The district council or equivalent, which collects the tax for the parish council.

Section 50 of the Local Government Act Finance Act 1992 specifies the calculation of the budget requirement for local precepting authorities. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Parish Council must also ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control.

During the process of calculating the precept. Council should be mindful that the sums it sets must be sufficient to cover the following:

- Next year's expenditure, including an allowance for contingencies
- Outstanding expenditure in previous years
- Expenditure that is anticipated to be incurred before the precepted sum becomes available
- Payments to a sinking fund, capital fund or a renewal and repairs fund
- Comparisons between expenditure and income

#### **Risks associated with the setting of the budget**

##### **1. Risk 1 – Capping of Parish Council precepts**

Whilst capping is possible in the future, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published in December the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25, that whilst there will be council tax referendum limits for principal councils, there is again an exemption for town and parish councils. This means we can continue to set precepts without a referendum.

##### **Risk Assessment – Low likelihood and low impact**

##### **2. Risk 2 – Sustainability of village amenities**

The continuing operation of amenities in the parish relies upon efforts of the parish council to raise income whilst controlling costs. There are times and circumstances when the Parish Council will need to rely on external funding or where the parish council itself will be asked for financial assistance. With the continued growth of the village of Brantham there will be a greater call on the current facilities as well as the need for improved or a wider range available to the population. There is an expectation that, as in the previous year, the parish council will be expected to undertake a number of services that are no longer offered by either the District or the County ie. hedge clearance, gully and gutter clearance etc.

##### **Risk Assessment – Medium likelihood and medium impact**

### 3. Risk 3 - Personnel costs

Council must be aware that it needs to comply with employment law and pension legislation. Annual pay awards and performance reviews should be built into budgets for future years. In addition, if any new employees “opt-in” to the local government pension scheme, there will be higher staff costs through employer contributions to the pension scheme. The Clerk is currently the only member of staff enrolled in a NEST pension scheme with employer contribution on qualifying earnings only at 6% for 2024-25. The breakdown of the budget to be set shows the staff costs covered by the budget and any associated employment costs (including unknown annual pay increase for 2024-25)

**Risk Assessment – Medium likelihood and medium impact**

### 4. Risk 4 – Asset Replacement Reserve

Council should consider allocating on an annual basis a sum to be made as a contribution to an Asset Replacement Reserve to allow a reasonable sum to be maintained for the replacement of the assets held by the Council on a rolling basis. Currently the Council has no reserves for recreational equipment or property maintenance. New equipment over the last couple of years has been funded from Neighbourhood CIL monies held by the Parish Council.

**Risk Assessment – Medium likelihood and medium impact**

### 5. Risk 5 – Failure to contribute to General Reserves

The Parish Council currently has no held general reserves. The Council should ensure that such reserves are held in accordance with Proper Practices which states that one of the key stages in determining the budget is to “provide for contingencies and consider the need for reserves.” As with any financial entity, the Parish Council must ensure that it has sufficient reserves (both general and earmarked) to finance both its day-to-day operations and future plans. However, it should be remembered that given that the majority of its funds are generated from taxation/public reserves, it needs to ensure that such reserves are not excessive.

**Risk Assessment – Medium likelihood and High impact**

### 6. Failure to manage Restricted Reserves (CIL Funds)

A portion of CIL income is paid to the Parish Council to be spent by the Parish Council on offsetting the impacts of development in the area. These sums must be held in a designated reserve (restricted reserve) to support the expenditure on facilities and services to ensure that there is the capacity to sustain such growth. Over time this will lead to a reduction in the total reserve available and all associated revenue costs will need to be brought into the revenue budgets funded by the Precept. Such reserves have a time limit in which expenditure must be incurred.

**Risk Assessment – Medium likelihood and medium impact**

## PRECEPT DEMAND

The starting point for the preparation of the Draft Budget involves a review of recent trends in respect of receipts and payments along with known associated costs for new assets and anew expenditure incurred. Council has previously run with the presumption that any increase in Precept shall be in line with inflation with an explanation for departure from such a trend.

Please see the attached Budget spreadsheet (Paper 5) for first indication of precept demand for 2025-26. This may be subject to change when Tax Base figures are finalised in January 2025.

## TAX BASE

BDC have issued the Indicative Taxbase calculator and Indicative Tax Base information via email on 14 November 2024. These figures have been used in the calculation of the Precept to be set as per the detailed workings in Paper 5.

Tax Base for 2025-26	Tax Base for 2024-25	% Change	Status
£1092.33	£998.16	9.43%	INDICATIVE

The budget in the sum of £150,094 is submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration at its meeting on 27 November 2024 with details of the funding sources for the overall budget.

So far the tax base figures are indicative and these may therefore be subject to change. As it stands the Precept required to cover the non-funded aspects of the budget set for 2025-25 will be £68.80 on a BAND D property. This represents an increase of £5.05 per annum or 7.92% on a BAND D Property.

#### Analysis of the Tax Base for Brantham since 2021-22

Year	Tax Base	Band D	Movement in £	Movement in %	Precept in £
2021-22	870.79	55.79			48,585
2022-23	944.08	56.91	1.12	2.00	53,728
2023-24	963.70	59.75	2.84	4.99	57,581
2024-25	998.16	63.75	4.00	6.69	63,636
2025-26*	1092.33	68.80	5.05	7.92	75,156

\*draft

#### Reserves – Earmarked, Restricted and General

Council should be mindful of guidance given within the Practitioners Guide to Proper Practices to be applied in the preparation of Statutory Annual Accounts and Governance Statements (March 2024) which states that “The authority needs to have regard to the need to put in place a General Reserve Policy and have reviewed the level and purpose of all Earmarked Reserves.”

As with any financial entity, the Parish Council must ensure that it has sufficient reserves (both general and earmarked) to finance both its day-to-day operations and future plans. However, it should be remembered that given that the majority of its funds are generated from taxation/public reserves, it needs to ensure that such reserves are not excessive.

#### Earmarked reserves

Earmarked and Other Reserves – none of the above in any way affects the level of Earmarked and/or Capital Receipts Reserves (EMR/CRRs) that an authority may or should hold. There is, in practice, no upper or lower limit to EMR/CRRs save only that they must be held for genuine and intended purposes, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually) and should be separately identified and enumerated. Significant levels of EMRs in particular may give rise to enquiries from Internal and/or External Auditors.

#### Restricted Reserves

Neighbourhood CIL is passed to Parish Councils by BDC where development is taking place. The amount will be 15% or 25 % depending on whether the community has an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Brantham does not have an adopted NDP.

The CIL regulations 2010 as amended state that the parish council must spend the CIL income they received from the District on either:

- The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure

Or

- Anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

Providing CIL is spent in accordance with the above, CIL monies may be used to provide seed or match funding with other income streams and/or may be spent collaboratively with other parish councils, community interest companies or other providers to make the most efficient use of funding to benefit the community.

#### General Reserves

The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure. This (subject to

planned surplus or deficit) is effectively the precept less any loan amounts included in the precept for capital projects and transfers to earmarked funds.

Council is therefore encouraged to adopt as a General Reserve the level that is appropriate to its size and situation and plan its Budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained.

Current General Reserve	Level under 3-month equivalents to be held for contractual duties	Variance £
£0	£15,909	TBC

**The General Reserve Fund will be determined at 31 March 2025 (the end of the Financial Year) and Council is encouraged to ensure that it meets the 3-moth rule as outlined above.**

Current Earmarked Reserves stand at:

<b>Earmarked Reserves (Designated Reserves)</b>				
	Opening Balance 01.04.24	Movement	Reasoning	Current balance
Computer/Office Equipment	500			500
Parish Poll/Election	2000			2000
Legal Expenses	9,169			9169
Roads	10,000			10,000
Lighting	5,772			5,772
Horticulture	935			935
Limecrest Fund	20,419			20,419
Village Hall Projects	30,000			30,000
CIL Funds	67,603	+18,024	Income/Expenditure	85,627
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>146,350</b>			<b>164,374</b>

**BPC ANNUAL BUDGET 2025-26**

**VERSION 2 of DRAFT BUDGET**

**DATE OF ADOPTION: TBC**

**MINUTE NO. TBC**

**Updated:**

CATEGORY	BUDGET 2022-23	ACTUAL 2022-23	BUDGET 2023-24	ACTUAL 2023-24	UPDATED BUDGET 2024-25	BUDGET 2025-26	NOTES
EXPENDITURE							
<a href="#">SALARY/CONTRACT</a>							
Clerk/RFO	17,900	17,269	18,000	19,601	24,000	24,700	1
Assistant Clerk					2,770	7,400	2
Litter Pickers	6,000	5,696	6,500	5,903	12,000	12,340	3
Employers PAYE & NI	4,000	4,734	5,000	6,117	7,000	8,000	4
Clerk's Pension	750	1,044	1,000	1,210	1,500	1,315	5
Payroll costs	350	192	350	192	350	350	
TOTAL	29,000	28,935	30,850	33,022	47,620	54,105	

<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Audit	700	592
Hall Hire	400	265
Insurance	5,500	3,290
Office Allowance - Clerk & Assistant Clerk	240	200
Petrol/travel costs	50	0
Postage	60	87
Telephone - VL and GiffGaff SIM	300	100
Stationery	300	98
Website/Email	500	400
Training	1,000	143
GDPR costs	50	35
Miscellaneous	1,000	638
Staff recruitment	200	0
Election costs	1,000	0
Councillor expenses	200	0
Purchases (i.e. office equipment)		0
ZOOM subscription	180	180
Accounting software		0
Microsoft subscription		0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,680</b>	<b>6,040</b>

700	797
500	488
5,500	5,268
240	246
50	62
70	85
300	0
300	125
500	204
500	642
50	35
	1,365
200	0
1,500	204
200	0
200	0
	0
	288
	102
<b>10,810</b>	<b>9,910</b>

800	800
570	580
5,500	6,125
315	480
50	50
100	50
	177
300	300
500	338
500	1,500
50	35
200	
500	
200	100
200	200
300	295
110	124
<b>10,195</b>	<b>11,154</b>

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<b>SUBS/GRANTS/DONATIONS</b>		
SALC Subscription	850	886
SLCC Subscription	197	111
Donations	1,900	2,099
Brantham Open Spaces support		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,947</b>	<b>3,096</b>

850	808
197	144
1,500	1,650
1,200	318
<b>3,747</b>	<b>2,921</b>

850	850
120	288
2,700	2,500
1,200	1,200
<b>4,870</b>	<b>4,838</b>

20  
21



<u>SERVICES</u>							
BDC Litter bin emptying	1,800	1,420	2,000	1,792	2,830	2,970	22
Litter purchases	500	162	900	62	1,000	0	
Playground Inspection	300		300	0	300	192	23
General Village Maintenance	9,960	3,283	7,000	2,257	2,500	3,000	24
Playground equipment/repairs	1,000	40,136	4,000	101	1,500	1,500	
BLC Grounds Maintenance	4,000	3,984	4,000	2,942	480	480	
GPL Play area rent	10	10	10	10	10	10	
Horticulture	170	0	200	36	200		25
SCC Street Light contract Maintenance	2,250	1,004	2,400	1,217	1,400	1,140	26
Village Hall Maintenance Grant	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,117	5,000	5,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,990</b>	<b>52,999</b>	<b>23,810</b>	<b>11,532</b>	<b>15,220</b>	<b>14,292</b>	

<u>OTHER</u>							
CCTV Costs				590	400	290	27
SID/SID Maintenance	100	0	100	0	1,000	500	28
Defibrillator Maintenance	250	53	250	127	500	500	29
Parish Plan activities/support		0		310	2,500	500	30
Projects/CIL	332	0	1,586		30		
Miscellaneous		10,149		7,936			
VAT		10,247					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>20,449</b>	<b>1,936</b>	<b>8,963</b>	<b>4,430</b>	<b>1,790</b>	

<u>CIL FUNDED PROJECTS</u>							
Village Hall Toilet updates						2,915	31
Skate Park						45,000	32
Recreational equipment/Assets				33,234		10,000	33
Village Assets i.e. bins etc						1,000	
Donations						5,000	34
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>33,234</b>		<b>63,915</b>	

<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>67,299</b>	<b>111,519</b>	<b>71,153</b>	<b>99,582</b>	<b>82,335</b>	<b>150,094</b>	
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# **FUNDED BY:**

Precept	53,728	53,728	57,581	57,581	63,636	75,156
Bank Interest	30	223	30	1,615	1,877	1,200
Rent (BMCIC)	1,650	1,388	1,650	1,801	1,650	1,650
Annual Insurance repayment from BMCIC				975	2,221	2,222
Highcliff Lease	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,460	5,460
Braiswick road contribution					150	150
VAT reclaimed	1,500	8,024	1,500	5,887	2,000	
Recycling	300	182	300	493	300	300
Scouts Ground Rent	1	1	1	0	1	1
Private Road contribution	40	40	40	40	40	40
CIL reserves	5,000	12,482	5,000	29,351	5,000	63,915
CIL Grant (BDC)				3,883		
miscellaneous		4,433		291		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67,249</b>	<b>85,501</b>	<b>71,102</b>	<b>106,918</b>	<b>82,335</b>	<b>150,094</b>

## **Funded by CIL**

CIL not included within budget as it is to be used to fund infrastructure needed to mitigate development coming forth from growth in the village

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual to September 2024
CIL Receipts							
CIL Expenditure							

## **NOTES**

- Clerk's salary 24 hours per week x 52 weeks Current salary scale SCP 24-28. Calculated using 24-25 hourly rate and anticipated increase in Nov 25 of 1.5%
- Assistant Clerk post employed on contract of 8 hours per week. Build in additional hours to 12 per week from Sept 25. Current salary scale 10-14. Build in incremental point from Sept 25. Anticipate pay award of 1.5% in Nov 25
- Litter pickers - 24-25 salary £12 per hour. Anticipate increase of £1 per hour.
- These figures are currently indicative and may be subject to change. I have requested a calculation from SALC to confirm
- Paid on **qualifying earnings** (at estimated 20.05ph above) £6240 for 24-25
- Based on costs for 24-25 +5%

£26pm for Clerk and £14pm for Assistant Clerk	7
Should be a reducing cost due to online banking facility (i.e reduced need to post cheques)	8
£6pm - GiffGaff SIM, £8.75pm Virtual Landline	9
Costs for paper, printer ink etc	10
Onesuffolk subscription - £50, 12 mailboxes for 12 months - £288	11
Cllrs to continue training as part of continual professional development and assistant Clerk to undertake training for development	12
No indication that this will increase	13
Likely no cost. Advertising via SALC is free. Other adverts can be included on social media or in The Bugle for zero cost	14
Election unlikely, should costs for an election be incurred this could be drawn from general reserves	15
Amount reduced to reflect lack of expenses expenditure in the past	16
Possible a printer may need to be purchased for Assistant Clerk. All other equipment currently sound	17
Based on 23-24 invoice + anticipated inflationary increase of 2.3%	18
Microsoft Business standard (£10.30pm)	19
Based on 24-25 figures	20
Cost increase as fee is no longer shared with Tattingstone Parish Council	21
Based on 24-25 invoice + anticipated increase of 5%	22
Based on letter with detailed cost received September 2024	23
Total cost in 23-24 £2256.50. Projected cost in 24-25 £3000	24
Horticulture projects to be funded from reserves	25
Based on invoice in March 2024 of £1112 + CPI 2.3%	26
3 x SIM cards with Smarty at £9pm each	27
Possible new batteries/posts needed	28
Replacement batteries/pads	29
Possible costs for future events	30
12.5% of total costs - may vary dependant on funds available from Babergh CIL bid	31
12.5% of possible costs of £180,000. Hope for contribution from Babergh CIL and other fundraising	32
Possible recreation equipment necessary in the future	33
Possible future project requests like RST project funded this year.	34