***Swannington Parish Council Precept 2021-22***

This year has been a very difficult year, taking over from the previous Clerk and finding out through the year, that what was thought to be free reserves was actually grant funding for the Neighborhood Plan, so not actually free! We then had the Coronavirus Pandemic putting us in to the first Lockdown in March 2020.

The unbudgeted money for the NHP has meant that funds from other allocated headings have now had to be used to cover this gap. On top of this, the loss of income from the bookings at the Village Hall have only partially been covered by the Covid grant.

This forthcoming year is going to be another difficult one, as it sees us starting the year in the third Lockdown! Income will be severely reduced again due to the Lockdowns, but it is hoped that by the summer bookings will be slowly coming back.

The Council Tax Support Grant from NWLDC has been removed this year. This was a grant that had been available for parish councils for a number of years but on a sliding scale.

Generally, the budget headings would normally be increased by the rate of inflation, except where there is some knowledge that more may be necessary throughout the year. This year, however, I have tried to keep them tight except for known additional expenditure.

The Parish Tax Base has increased this year to 470 (this is number of properties).

Even with the Coronavirus Pandemic to consider, there is still a strong threat that the Government will “cap” Parish and Town Councils in the future, and with the uncertainty for this year with the Pandemic continuing, it would be short-sighted to reduce the Band D payment and not to budget prudently.

The Parish Council appears to be forward thinking and needs to plan for the future ensuring that a robust Precept is put into place allowing the Parish Council to undertake its duties.

***Explanation notes to be used in conjunction with document 1***

1. Bank balances as at December 2020.
2. Anticipated spend by the year end, is the actual spend to date and the anticipated spend to the end of the year taken from the budget set from last year.
3. Working Balance as recommended by External Auditor. The Working Balance is operating cash and although there is no absolute sum, the Parish Council reserves policy states that it should have between 3 and 12 months reserves, therefore it is necessary to adhere to the advice from the auditor and increase (gradually) to the expected amount; not to do so would have the Auditor questioning the actions or lack-of of the Parish Council.
4. Money not spent to be transferred to Savings Programme. This should see the money put in one year for projects, transferred another year for large projects, for e.g. if the Parish Council started to save for a complete “re-build” of the village hall.
5. Money available to off-set the precept.
6. List of income sources. Village Hall bookings greatly reduced due to the Covid Pandemic.
7. % Increase on Precept for this year from last year is 11.37%.
8. % Increase on Band D property 2020-21 is 10.8%, 14p pence per week.
9. Figures/information not available from previous Clerk.

***Explanation notes to be used in conjunction with document 2***

1. Audit fees.
2. Travel – This is to cover for travel for the Clerk.
3. Contingencies – This is earmarked for unforeseen issues.
4. Election costs – An amount is included each year so that at the end of the four-year term there is sufficient funds to pay for an election if it is contested.
5. Printing/stationary/post/phone – General office supplies and mobile phone for Clerk.
6. Subs to outside bodies.
7. Training for staff and councillors including health and safety, new councillors training, fire safety, manual handling, etc.

 7a) Office furniture for the Clerk.

1. Computer/website – Annual on-going costs/new equipment. Over budget due to new website in 2020.
2. Chairman’s allowance – An amount set aside for the additional duties of being a chairman, presenting flowers for significant birthdays, etc.
3. Planning/legal fees – This covers for potential land transfers/registrations as agreed by the Parish Council; legal costs for dealing with disputes and advice necessary to deal with major planning matters, etc.

10a) Neighbourhood Plans covered by grants.

1. Village Hall – Gas and electric costs.
2. Village Hall – General and water rates.

 12a) Cleaning Services – This was a cost for cleaning the main hall floor; not

 undertaken now.

1. Village Hall – Repairs and maintenance, including new doors front and side; exterior painting and barge board replacements; projector and screen and tables and chairs.

13a) Trade Refuse – Commercial bins collections.

1. Village Hall – Health & Safety and Security to cover the necessary statutory requirements for holding a building.

 14a) Planning/legal fees – This covers potential costs for conclusion of charity transfer, etc.

14b) Christmas lights upgrade.

1. Insurance – Reviewed; long-term contract entered in to, plus Village Hall revalued so no major increases expected.
2. Wages – This allows for a % increase as agreed nationally, additional point annual pay increment and for TAX/NI and pension requirements for staff.
3. Allotment maintenance including shed removal/replacement on Railway site.

17a) Allotment land rent – Land is rented from Wyggestons Charity.

1. Grant fund – General grant fund for groups and charities meeting the necessary requirements to be given a grant
2. Recreation – General repairs and maintenance.

19a) Grounds Maintenance contract.

1. Recreation – Environmental projects, such as shrub/hedge works at the area at the junction of Spring Lane; repairs to other material objects in the village, ie Village Pump.

20a) Recreation – Playing Field Rent – Land is rented from Wyggestons Charity.

1. Recreation – Speed camera upgrades.
2. Capital projects – Works to be decided; if not spent transferred to Project fund for future projects.