

Annual Report and Accounts for Pitstone Parish Council Year Ending 31-3-2022

	To 31-3-2021	To 31-3-2022	Variance to previous year
Total Receipts	£1,176,635	£394,221	-77%
Total Payments	£1,134,862	£366,469	-78%
Balances Carried Forward	£122,902	£150,655	

The parish council is financially secure with no loans or debts. The majority of our capital projects progress with a high level of external grant funding, thus the rise and fall in receipts corresponds with the rise and fall in capital projects being undertaken.

Our accounts are subject to three layers of audit each year. The first is carried out by council members. The second is conducted by an 'internal auditor' appointed by the parish council. The parish council and the internal auditor's findings are then submitted to an 'external auditor' appointed to us, in our case PKF Littlejohn. Members of the public can view all audit reports on our website.

During the financial year, we undertook the long-awaited installation of the concrete skatepark, which has proved to be very popular with people of all ages. Further enhancements were made to the new community facilities at the Pavilion including relaying the front car park, installing a section of path, converting the shutters to electric operation, installing black out blinds and providing additional tables and outdoor bins. At our other sites, we installed thermoplastic graphics at the Windsor Road playground, installed picnic tables at the Hever Close playground, installed a noticeboard outside the Pavilion and purchased additional Christmas lights for the Recreation Ground. These capital projects account for £241,303 of expenditure (vs much higher levels the previous year to undertake the Pavilion renovations/extension, complete the Recreation Ground play space installation and replace both swing sets in the Windsor Road play space).

The normal council operations continue, and these receive no external grants, so are funded via the precept (or partially offset via income generated from hire of our facilities or advertising in our magazine). This includes maintaining streetlights, converting lighting to LED, litter picking, emptying dog bins, maintaining play equipment and open spaces, producing Pitstone Parish Post, supporting local community groups with grants, running the Volunteer of the Year Scheme, running the youth café and community car schemes, annual children's competitions, operating our two mVAS units, running the allotment site, maintaining parish assets, maintaining the Pavilion etc.

In line with the above, the capital projects delivered last financial year generated £1,017,313 of receipts in grants, donations, and the release of Section 106 funding. The equivalent level of receipts to support the capital projects delivered in the financial year ending 31-3-2022 totalled £212,225, giving rise to a reduction of £805,088. Like many organisations, there was also a reduction in Coronavirus government grant funding between the two years. However, the new Pavilion facilities became increasingly available as the pandemic restrictions lifted, and income is continually improving.

Devolved Services

The parish council undertakes some right of way maintenance, grass verge cutting and siding out on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council (BC) under powers they have devolved to us for these purposes. They pay a contribution of £3,552 towards the delivery of these services, which cost the parish £6,147 to deliver. However, it does mean that our grass can be cut more frequently, works carried out more efficiently, and we have more control over delivery of these services. Buckinghamshire Council extended the last contract for a further year to cover 2022, but have yet to confirm what, or if, there will be a devolved service offering for 2023 onwards, so we will keep residents advised in due course.

Ongoing Projects by Other Bodies/Tiers of Government

- Hertfordshire County Council continues to work with the Canal & River Trust and Buckinghamshire Council to specify possible cycle route improvements towards Tring station.
- Buckinghamshire Council continues to work with developers (Taylor Wimpey, Croudace, Nicholas King Homes and Bellway) to fulfil their highway and leisure obligations including the issues surrounding the multi-use games area.
- Buckinghamshire Council continues to work with both Pitstone and Ivinghoe parish councils re the Safety Scheme, Freight Strategy and parking by beauty spot proposals.