

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

To all Members of the Council. You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council of Whixall to be held on Wednesday 15th January at Whixall Social Centre which will commence at 7.30pm in order to conduct the business enclosed on the agenda below. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Signed:

A Mercer

Date: 10th January 2025

1. Chairman's welcome, announcements and public session

Should a member of the public so require they will be permitted to speak. Public speaking time will be limited to 15 minutes, 3 minutes per speaker

2. Apologies

3. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary or any other interests or requests for dispensations

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded that they must declare non-pecuniary interests relating to agenda items

4. To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th November 2024

5. Reports

Shropshire Councillors; Parish Councillors and Clerk

6. Parish Matters

- Marlot - to receive activity reports from MCG (circulated)
- Assets – to agree maintenance works at Moss Cottages Field (verbal report)
- Flooding – to receive verbal reports from Councillors
- Smart Meter mast and sundries – to receive a verbal report
- Newsletter – to receive a verbal report on responses to the newsletter survey
- Green Spaces and Active Travel Fund – to agree a course of action

7. Planning

- To receive planning applications from Shropshire Council – none received
- To note planning decisions made by Shropshire Council – none received
- To resolve to respond to request for letter of support for local needs dwelling, Hollinwood

8. Finance

- To receive Monthly Balance Record and reconciliation (circulated)
- To receive the Q3 budget and spending report (circulated)
- To resolve budget setting and precept for 2025-26 financial year (circulated)
- To resolve to approve outstanding invoices and payments.

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Amount	Reference
Payments Made Before the Meeting			
NEST	Pension Contribution Dec	82.91	49.24 DD
Hugo Fox	Website Costs (Dec)	23.99	50.24 DD
Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge (Dec)	6.00	51.24 DD
Employee	Salary (Dec)	333.71	52.24

Hugo Fox	Website Costs (Nov)	23.99	53.24 DD
New Payments to be approved			
HMRC	PAYE (Dec)	83.20	54.24
HMRC	PAYE (Jan)	83.40	55.24
Employee	Salary (Jan)	333.11	56.24 DD
NEST	Pension Contributions January	82.91	57.24
Employee	Reimbursement (Nov & Dec)	84.40	58.24
Julie Ankers	Over 66s Christmas Meals	440.00	59.24
J Higgins	Tree removal	1440.00	60.24
Whixall Social Centre	Room Hire	216.00	611.24
G Turnbull	Reimbursement (Marlot)	15.30	62.24 DD
Hugo Fox	Website Charge (January)	23.99	63.24 DD
Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge (January)	6.00	64.24

9. Items for Next Agenda

To enable Councillors to bring forward items for the 12th February 2024 meeting agenda.

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 13th November 2024
at Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: I Mercer (Chair), A Rawlinson, B Harris, J Spenser

Shropshire Councillors: E Towers P Broomhall

Clerk: A Roberts

Other Organisations 0

Members of the Public 7

86/24 Public Session

During the public session issues around a proposed development and Parish-wide flooding were raised and discussed.

87/24 Apologies for Absence

M Evans (work), D Edgerton (work), C Weedall (Illness)

88/24 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

89/24 Minutes of Previous Meetings

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Council meetings held on 9th October 2024 are accepted as an accurate record.

The Chair signed the minutes.

90/24 Reports

Reports from Shropshire Councillors were circulated in advance. The Clerk gave a verbal report. Their contents were noted.

91/24 Parish Matters

- a. Marlot: The Clerk reported that all work relating to the culvert has now been completed by Natural England. The Chair expressed his thanks to NE for the work they have done. The MCG activity report was circulated in advance – its contents were noted.
- b. Hollinwood Green: Martin Spenser submitted an activity report – its content was noted.
- c. Flooding issues – members noted the comments received about recent flooding issues. There was a discussion about additional issues and concerns relating to flooding.

92/24 Policies

- a. Asset Inspections

RESOLVED: To approve the asset inspection policy and regime. Cllrs Mercer and Rawlinson will discuss Marlot inspections with the Marlot Conservation Group and report back at a future meeting.

- b. GDPR Policies

RESOLVED: To approve all GDPR policies and procedures.

93/24 Planning

- a. To consider applications – none received
- b. To note planning decisions made by Shropshire Council

23/04304/FUL Proposed Local Needs Dwellings SW Of, Waterloo, Whixall, Shropshire
Erection of 2no exception site affordable dwellings and garage/outbuildings including access, renewable energy and drainage installations
Decision: Grant Permission

94/24 Financial Matters

- a. To receive monthly bank balance record and reconciliation.

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT (£)
31 October 2024	Current Account (Working Budget)	484.73
	Savings Account (Reserves)	24,161.83
TOTAL		24,646.56

The bank reconciliation and statements were checked and approved by Cllr Spenser and the balances were noted.

- b. Reserves Report
 The contents of the report were noted.
- c. Draft Budget
 Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk will refine the budget proposals and present them at the January meeting.
- d. Staff Pay Rise

RESOLVED: To implement the Local Government pay award, backdated to 1st April 2024.

- e. To resolve to approve outstanding accounts

RESOLVED: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the payment transactions authorised by two nominated councillors.

Funds Transferred Before the Meeting			
From	To	Amount	Reason
Savings	Current	1,000	Balance top up

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Total	Reference
Payments Made Before the Meeting			
Unity Bank	Bank Charges (October)	5.40	39.24DD
Hugo Fox	Website October	23.99	40.24DD
NEST	Pension Contributions October	79.45	41.24DD
New Payments approved			
HMRC	PAYE (Nov)	100.80	42.24
Employee	Salary (Nov inc. backpay)	403.20	43.24
Employee	Reimbursement	35.45	44.24
RBL	Poppy Wreath plus donation	50.00	45.24
SJF	Newsletter printing	124.00	46.24
NEST	Pension Contributions Nov	100.23	47.24DD
Unity Bank	Bank Charges (November)	6.00	48.24DD
G Turnbull	Materials (MCG)	13.99	49.24DD

Scheduled date of next meeting
12th January 2025 (7.30pm)

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Whixall Parish Council (PC)

Marlot Conservation Task Group Recorded voluntary hours spent on behalf of the Council

Date 2024 Q4 1 Oct - 31 Dec

	No of Workers	Total Hours Worked	Description of work	
22-Oct	1	1	Making Marlot Entrance sign	GT
27-Oct	1	1	Unlocking of gates for Natural England	TL
27-Oct	2	6	Natural England with digger; work on culvert/bridge	Natural England
28-Oct	2	6	Natural England with digger; work on culvert/bridge	Natural England
29-Oct	3	7	Natural England with digger; work on culvert/bridge/ Archiving photos of work	Natural England/GT
30-Oct	1	1	Finished making Marlot entrance sign	GT
4-Nov	2	2	Natural England cleared rubble from entrance	Natural England
9-Nov	1	1	Varnished Marlot sign	GT
13-Nov	2	2	Walk around check and assessment of winter work	GT, TL
26-Nov	3	4	Put up Marlot info sign, brush cut meadow bank, cut down willows	GT, AL, TL
3-Dec	2	3	Brush cut meadow side bak (Road side); clear silt	GT, TL
4-Dec	2	2	Natural England cut down storm damaged tree at ponds	Natural England
9-Dec	1	1	Check of Marlot after Strom Darragh	GT
10-Dec	3	4	Cut down storm damaged tree in woods; brush cut meadow roadside bank ; clear silt from ditch	GT, TL, AL
17-Dec	3	3	Brush cut banks, cut doen willows on bankside, clear silt	GT, TL, AL

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG)

Work report to Whixall Parish Council meeting January 2025

Reporting Period 11 Nov 24 – 6 Jan 25

A surprising amount of MCG volunteer was conducted during this reporting period. Although we experienced 2 storms and copious amounts of rain we were able to work during the dry and colder days. After the culvert/bridge repair by NE it was decided to concentrate work on the meadow side ditch and banks. Work started with a full brush cut of the meadow side bank to ensure a clear and safe working space along the ditch. This included cutting down all the close willow trees that had grown along the bank and into the ditch causing an obstruction to the water flow. This allowed MCG volunteers to start removing built up silt along the length of the ditch; particular attention was paid to the grate and exit flow area at the end of the ditch (close by the road at James' farm). There is still much work to be done in clearing more silt and this will continue in the next few sessions. We also started work on clearing the roadside bank of the heavy areas of bracken and dense grass. This has opened up that bank and allows for a clear view into the Marlot from the road – again some work is still required to finish this off.

During this period we experienced two storms which caused some trees in the Marlot to be uprooted and fall. One dangerous uprooted tree came down across the path at the terrace area of the ponds. On inspection by MCG volunteers it was decided that the positioning and size of the tree was too dangerous and a little beyond our abilities/expertise and therefore we asked Natural England for assistance. Steve Dobbin and Ellie Williams from Natural England came down for a couple of hours and removed the tree. Later on after the second storm another tree along the pathway in the woodland area came down – this was not so difficult or dangerously positioned and so the MCG volunteers carried out the work and cut the tree down.

The "old" information board that used to be situated inside the Marlot has now been attached to the pond side fence at the entrance. Unfortunately the sign structure was accidentally destroyed when NE were conducting work on the culvert/bridge. Its new position is visible and adds to the new clear entrance area – complementing the Marlot leaflets box and new "Welcome" sign.

Further winter work will concentrate on the meadow ditch and banks, but again all subject to weather conditions and volunteer availability.

Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group
6 Jan 25

From: Chris Mellings <Chris.Mellings@shropshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 January 2025 15:15
Subject: Green Spaces & Active Travel Fund - Wellbeing Benches - Expression of Interest
Categories: Jan meeting

To: Member Councils - Shropshire

Dear Colleague

In discussion with Chris Child from Energize / Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Community Resource an opportunity has arisen for SALC to consider an application for funding via Crowdfund Shropshire under the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The potential project aims to support the improved health and wellbeing of local communities across Shropshire by offering a subsidized bench/es for Shropshire's local communities.

Research amongst many agencies (see below) has demonstrated that a well-placed public bench can;

- Offer people a place to sit and rest so that they are more likely to move and walk around their local area. This is especially true for people who experience mobility challenges. Obviously, you sit on a bench, but studies show that people will do a lot more local walking if there is somewhere to go and sit. So surprisingly and counter-intuitively, sitting outdoors actually encourages walking.
- Provide a place to meet and connect with others. Opportunities for social connection are important, particularly for those living on their own. Also, when space is shared, everyone benefits – studies show that shared places become safer and more interesting.
- Offer a chance to benefit from the outdoors and nature. Our parasympathetic nervous system kicks in outdoors so that we feel calmer and more peaceful, even in an urban setting (though sitting near to nature – plants, trees, water, grass – amplifies this relaxing effect and is a natural mood-booster).

Therefore, the project aims to place benches across Shropshire in places which encourage walking, connection with others and a chance to benefit from local nature/green space. This would be our criteria for allocating benches and benches will also be marked up with appropriate messages to encourage these activities.

At this expression of interest stage, we are not asking for exact locations but please note that it would be the respective Town / Parish Council's responsibility to place the benches in places where you have permission to do so and you would also be responsible for the installation and any associated costs.

Through the Shropshire Green Spaces and Active Travel Fund the project hopes to be able to provide a bench/es at a cost of £100 each to the Parish / Town Council, with the balance coming from the Fund. All benches would be sourced from local sustainable woodland and of an appropriate standard to last up to 30 to 40 years. Funds would need to be secured before 31st March 2025 and we envisage that benches would be delivered in the spring / early summer of the same year.

If you are interested in participating in the project, please can you confirm by email indicating:

- How many Health & Wellbeing benches you would be willing to contribute to – up to a maximum of 3 (three).
- The parish/town council would be willing to donate £100 towards each bench and that this £100 would be placed via a crowdfunding campaign
(Please Note:- the other £200 approx. would be covered by the Shared Prosperity Fund via Shropshire Council, Green Spaces and Active Travel Funding.)
- The Parish / Town Council would take responsibility for placing the benches in places which meet the above criteria, where you have permission to do so and that you would be responsible for the installation and any associated costs.

Please note the submission of this expression of interest is in principle only and does not form any legally binding agreement on behalf of either party.

In the event of the project being oversubscribed, funding will be allocated on a first come first serve basis.

Expressions of interest should be emailed by **5pm on Wednesday 22nd January**. I appreciate this is a tight timescale but unfortunately, we are being driven by the requirements of the Fund.

Hope this may be seen as a beneficial project to your Council and local community and look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks.

Best Wishes

Chris

Chris Mellings

Chief Officer – Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC)

Email: chris.mellings@shropshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01743 252744

SALC Office, The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

www.alcshropshire.co.uk

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From: Town Clerk <info@wem.gov.uk>
Sent: 20 December 2024 08:31
To: Whixall PC; Grinshill PC
Subject: Grant application
Attachments: Active Travel Grant.docx

Hi Graham and Mandy

I had a meeting about the active travel grant yesterday and as ever time is against us with regard to any application as it needs to be submitted ideally before end of January. It is subject to crowd funding but I have sneaking feeling that if the grant is underspent and we don't get the crowd funding we might get it anyway – this was not said at the meeting or implied it is just a feeling I have as Shropshire Council is not going to want to return it

I have put together a really brief sheet on what we could apply for and costs involved. It will be on the theme of improving cycling infrastructure in Wem and its hinterland. I attach the sheet, please feel free to pull it apart, suggest different locations as I appreciate that the installation of interpretation panels and units will need permission from landowners etc I am happy to get some indicative costs from Shelly Signs for interpretation panels.

I appreciate the issues around mountain biking on Grinshill so maybe the interpretation panel there should be around information for mountain bikers visiting the area and I am not sure if the items in the bike repair kit is mountain bike compatible either so this would be worth checking out.

The Town Council were very supportive of the proposal last night so I have a green light from them

If you think the idea is nonsense and want to put forward something new let me know as I am open to anything. Ideally I only want to include 3 parishes due to timescales but if you think we should widen it let me know.

Anyway if you find some time over the festivities to think about this and have any ideas please let me know
Happy Christmas

Best wishes

Penny O'Hagan
Town Clerk

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Active Travel Grant

Early idea - Wem Welcomes cyclists project to encourage cyclists and promote cycle routes in the town and surrounding villages

Capital Purchase

3 x Public Bike Repair Stand & Pump £1,275.00 exl VAT

3 x Wheel Chock £175 each



Installation Locations

Whixall (Marina ?)

Wem Train Station

Grinshill – Corbet Wood car park

Additional items

3 x Interpretation panels at each location approx £3000

Wem – panel outlining Wem Cycle rides

Whixall Marina - panel outlining family cycle routes from the marina

Grinshill Corbet wood – Mountain bike interpretation panel

Item	
Bike repair unit x 3 inc installation	£6000
Interpretation panels x 3	£3000
contingency	£1000
Total	£10,000
Crowd funding needed	£3000

Your Account Statement



For Businesses. For Communities. For Good.

Unity Trust Bank plc
PO Box 7193
Planetary Road
Willenhall
WV1 9DG

Mrs Amanda Roberts
Whixall Parish Council
2 Tilley Road
Wem
Shrewsbury
SY4 5HA

Date: 31/12/2024

Account Name: Whixall Parish Council

Swift Code (BIC): NWBKGB2L

IBAN Number: GB93NWBK60023571418024

Sort Code: 608301

Account Number: 20423117

Your arranged overdraft limit is £0.00

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Contact Us

Call us: 0345 140 1000

Email us: us@unity.co.uk

Visit us: [unity.co.uk](https://www.unity.co.uk)

Your Current T1 account transactions:

Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
30/11/2024		Balance brought forward	£0.00	£0.00	£627.07
16/12/2024	Faster Payment Debit	B/P to: AJ Roberts	£333.71	£0.00	£293.36
23/12/2024	Direct Debit	Direct Debit (GOCARDLESS)	£23.99	£0.00	£269.37
31/12/2024	Direct Debit	Direct Debit (NEST)	£82.91	£0.00	£186.46

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Statement number 075

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Your Current T1 account transactions:					
Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
31/12/2024	Fee	Service Charge	£6.00	£0.00	£180.46



Bank reconciliation (Whixall Parish Council 2024-2025)

Whixall Parish Council

Bank account: Working Account Reconciliation as at: 31/12/2024

Balance per bank statement at 31/12/2024	180.46
TOTAL NET BANK BALANCES at 31/12/2024	180.46
The total net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments) as follows	
Opening balance at 01/04/2024	40.56
Total receipts	13010.33
Total payments	-6400.43
Total transfers	-6470.00
Closing balance per cash book as at 31/12/2024 (must equal net bank balances above)	180.46

Your Account Statement



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Unity Trust Bank plc
PO Box 7193
Planetary Road
Willenhall
WV1 9DG

Mrs Amanda Roberts
Whixall Parish Council
2 Tilley Road
Wem
Shrewsbury
SY4 5HA

Date: 31/12/2024

Account Name: Whixall Parish Council

Swift Code (BIC): NWBKGB2L

IBAN Number: GB93NWBK60023571418024

Sort Code: 608301

Account Number: 20423120

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 Call us: 0345 140 1000

 Email us: us@unity.co.uk

 Visit us: unity.co.uk

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Your Instant Access account transactions:					
Date	Type	Details	Payments Out	Payments In	Balance
30/11/2024		Balance brought forward	£0.00	£0.00	£23,161.83
31/12/2024	Credit Interest	Credit Interest	£0.00	£158.06	£23,319.89

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Statement number 057

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Show reconciled transactions (Whixall Parish Council 2024-2025)

Whixall Parish Council

Details of bank reconciliation dated 31/12/2024 for Savings

Date	Type	Reference	Supplier / customer	Description	Amount
Opening statement balance					24161.83
Reconciled transactions					
06/11/2024	Transfer	Transfer		Balance Top Up	-1000.00
31/12/2024	Receipt	R6	Unity Trust Bank	Bank Interest Q3	158.06
Reconciled Balance					23319.89

Figures exclude VAT

Payments

	April - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec	TOTAL
Other Payments				
Miscellaneous Payment:	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Other Payments	0	0	0	0
Administration				
General Admin	0	59	0	59
Bank charges	18	18	17	53
Website and Newsletter	60	60	184	304
Elections	0	0	0	0
Audit	0	0	0	0
Room Hire	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0
Insurance	657	0	0	657
Affiliations	0	417	112	529
TOTAL Administration	735	553	313	1,602
Asset Management				
Grass cutting	0	0	0	0
Hollinwood Green	0	7	0	7
Marlot routine works	0	26	12	37
Marlot emergency repair	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Asset Management	0	32	12	44
Community				
Chairman Fund	0	0	50	50
Events	0	0	0	0
TOTAL Community	0	0	50	50
Staffing				
Staff - non-salary costs	81	142	71	294
Salaries	1,030	1,836	1,500	4,366
TOTAL Staffing	1,111	1,978	1,571	4,660
TOTAL Payments	1,846	2,564	1,946	6,356
Receipts				
	April - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec	TOTAL
Precept				
Precept Payment	12,880	0	0	12,880
TOTAL Precept	12,880	0	0	12,880
Other receipts				
VAT Repayments	129	0	0	129
CIL / Neighbourhood Fund	0	0	0	0
Bank Interest	155	178	158	491
Miscellaneous Receipts	0	0	1	1
TOTAL Other receipts	284	178	159	621
TOTAL Receipts	13,164	178	159	13,501

Expenditure	Budget 24-25 £	Proposed Budget 25-26 £	Change £
Administration			
General Admin	120.00	205	85
Bank charges	75.00	75	0
Website/gov.uk	370.00	370	0
Newsletter			0
Elections	0.00		0
Audit	120.00	120	0
Room Hire	324.00	324	0
Training	220.00	220	0
Insurance	450.00	690	240
Affiliations	645.00	695	50
Total Administration	2,324.00	2699	375
Asset Management			
Grass cutting	1,650.00	1750	100
Hollinwood Green	0.00	50	50
Marlot routine works	250.00	262	12
Marlot emergency repairs (EMR)	200.00	0	-200
Amount to precept for EMR	1,350.00	975	-375
Total Asset Management	3,450.00	3037	-413
Community			0
Chairman's Fund	440.00	500	60
Events	440.00	440	0
Total Community	880.00	940	60
Staffing			0
Staff - non-salary costs	437.00	460	23
Salaries	6,160.00	6652	492
Total Staffing	6,597.00	7112	515
			0
TOTAL	13,251.00	13788	537

Receipts	Budget 24-25 £	Est. Income 25-26 £	Change £
Precept	12,880.00	13637	757
Other receipts			
CIL / Neighbourhood Fund	0.00		
Bank Interest	200.00	150	-50
Miscellaneous Receipts	1.00	1	
Total Other receipts	201.00	151	707
Total Receipts	13,081.00	£13,788	

Additional Information

EXPENDITURE

Overall increase: £537

Administration

Increase: £375

- Insurance and affiliations have increased
- Finance software was not included in last year's budget
- Elections funding is held in EMR
- Room hire includes an amount for litter picking
- The website cost is unchanged but the package will be reduced and the saving will cover the move to gov.uk
-

Asset Management

Decrease: £413

- Grass cutting has been increased by £100 as a new contract is to be let in 25-26. The current contract has come in under budget every year.
- A small budget has been introduced for Hollinwood Green
- Marlot routine works increased by 5%
- Marlot emergency budget is held in EMR
- Contribution to EMR is reduced (see table below)

Community

Increase: £50

- Chair's Fund increased by £50
- Events retained at £440

Staffing

Increase: £515

- Non salary costs increased by 5% for inflation
- Salary costs increased by £492 (incremental increase, pay award and NI)

RECEIPTS

- Bank interest reduction anticipated
- Bowling club rent unchanged

PRECEPT

Due to a change in the council tax base for Whixall, an annual increase of 36p on a Band D property is required for the precept to stay at 2024-25 levels. The precept required for the proposed budget is £13,637. This represents an annual increase of £2.46 for Band D, taking it to £40.29 in total. This is a monthly increase of 20p.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Decisions need to be made about increasing the Chairman's fund, budgeting for the Christmas meal and provision of the newsletter.

It is recommended that some underspend from the current year is moved to EMR to cover future maintenance issues and, if required, to fund newsletter delivery. Precise values can be agreed at the April meeting.

Reserves as at January 2025

Reserves	Type	General Note	Reserve Level	25/26 set aside
Office Equipment	EM	5-year replacement cycle	368	205
Marlot Equipment Replacement	EM	10-year replacement cycle	575	250
Elections	EM	Required in case election called	1393	275
Lawnmower Replacement	EM	5-year replacement cycle	419	30
General Asset Painting and Maintenance	EM	Relating to assets 001 / 009/012/016	1069	215
Hollinwood Green Table/Bench	EM	Allow 10 years for replacement	473	0
Marlot Emergency Fund	EM	Hold at £200	200	0
Marlot Action Plan	Ringfenced		108	n/a
CIL Neighbourhood Fund	Ringfenced		2158.92	n/a
Total Reserves			6763.92	975