Parish Council – Annual Financial Report

Financial Year: 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

Executive Summary

The Parish Council ended the 2025/26 financial year in a stable and compliant financial position. Income and expenditure remained broadly in line with budget, and reserves were maintained at an appropriate level to ensure operational resilience.

- Total Income: **£14,245**
- Total Expenditure: **£13,070**
- Year-End Reserves: **£70,678**
- Key investments included asset maintenance and addition, grounds maintenance and improvements.

1. Introduction

This Annual Financial Report provides a detailed overview of the Parish Council's financial activity for the year ending 31 March 2026. It supports the statutory Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and is presented at the Annual Parish Assembly.

2. Income Overview

2.1 Income Summary

Income Source	Amount (£)	Notes
Precept	10,326	Main source of income
Facility Hire Fees	1,306	Recreation ground
CIL / Section 106	1,931	Restricted infrastructure funds
Other Income	681	Interest on reserves

2.2 Income Narrative

The precept remained the council's primary income stream. Additional income was generated through recreation ground hire, interest on reserves and restricted CIL receipts earmarked for more infrastructure improvements.

3. Expenditure Overview

3.1 Expenditure Summary

Expenditure Category	Amount (£)	Notes
Staffing Costs	2322	Clerk salary, HMRC payroll

Expenditure Category	Amount (£)	Notes
Grounds Maintenance	2,710	Grass cutting, hedge/tree works
Village Hall / Facilities	7,200	Utilities, repairs, cleaning
Community Projects	5,400	Events, small grants
Administration	1,795	Insurance, website, subscriptions
Capital Expenditure	3,488	Asset maintenance & purchase
ESCC grass cuts	1,216	Extra urban grass cuts
Grants issued	797	Grant application payments

3.2 Expenditure Narrative

Expenditure remained within budget across all major categories. Investment focused on maintaining essential services and improving community assets.

4. Reserves Position

4.1 Reserves Summary

Reserve Type	Balance	Purpose
General Reserve	£12,000	Working balance for emergencies
Earmarked CIL	£8,000	Gate works, phonebox, bus-shelters
CIL / Restricted Funds	£28,000	Infrastructure improvements
Held reserves	£22,600	Pavillion work, sewage works

4.2 Reserves Narrative

Reserves remain within recommended levels, ensuring financial resilience, savings towards pavilion repairs/rebuild and the ability to respond to unexpected costs.

5. Key Projects Delivered in 2025/26

- New defibrillator in phone box at Guestling Green
- Replacement for bench not previously Parish owned at Three Oaks Station
- Leafleting and engagement for Local Plan feedback
- Signage replacement and maintenance and forward budgeting for further signage (field and border)
- Bus shelter maintenance and forward budgeting for two new bus shelters
- Transparency work on website

6. Governance & Internal Control

The council maintained robust financial controls, including:

- Monthly bank reconciliation

- Dual-authorisation for payments
- Compliance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
- Independent internal audit

No significant issues were identified during the internal audit.

7. AGAR Compliance

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return includes:

- Section 1: Governance Statement
- Section 2: Accounting Statements

The public rights period will run from June to July.

8. Forward Plan for 2026/27

Planned priorities include:

- Completion of phonebox work and noticeboard refurbishment
- Purchase and install of two new bus shelters on A259
- Continued maintenance of playing fields
- Completion of gate and track works
- Digital and communications upgrades
- Further investigation into drainage and pavilion options