

Meeting: 9 January 2014

1. Introduction

The following is a more detailed breakdown of proposed expenditure at the community hall during 2014-2015. Cheshire East Council, in preparing the new lease, has stated that any income accrued from future commercial usage must be applied to the promotion of leisure and recreation at the hall.

2. Cost of Operating the Hall

The budget proposals identified (including staffing costs) amount to £28,058. Projected income for the calendar year 2014 is £4,740 but this is an unreliable figure and could be less. The Parish Council will need to consider if subsidising the hall up to £23,400 is an appropriate use of public money. The projected deficit represents a significant proportion of the Parish Council's budget.

Although a vocal minority is of the view that the hall is a vital asset to the community, the evidence suggests otherwise. There has been no interest in booking the hall for casual use despite a two-thirds page spread in the last newsletter issued three months ago.

The table below is extracted from Appendix 1 (attached to the Budget Proposals Report). This provides more information against each item of expenditures. Line Nos. correspond to those on Appendix 1.

Line No.	Item	£	Notes
4 (b)	Gross additional salary for Clerk	3,378.00	This represents the addition of 5 hours to the Clerk's contract, with effect from 1 January 2014.
47	Sports-Booker – on-line booking system. Monthly fee of £40 plus VAT	480.00	The contract is month-to-month and can be terminated at any time. However, elsewhere on the agenda is an invoice for payment covering the period 1 Sept 2013 – 31 August 2014 (£576).
46	Cleaning	9,400.00	This is based on daily cleans, but could be reduced dependent on usage.
61	Industrial-sized waste receptacles to be affixed outside the hall.	1,000.00	Quotations have not yet been provided and this sum is a "guesstimate"
62	Barrier to replace the risers	1,800.00	One quotation has been received.
63	CCTV	2,000.00	Although a report is awaited from the Crime Reduction Adviser, he suggested that CCTV was ineffective. Potential burglars would conceal their identity through use of appropriate clothing. If the Parish Council was minded to purchase CCTV, he suggested that there were less expensive options than the original £5,000 included in the budget.
64	Cost of managing the hall	5,000.00	Subsequent to the Parish Council's decision to accept Nantwich Town Council's (NTC) offer to assist in managing the hall, the Legal Adviser has advised that it will be necessary for someone to show each casual user around the hall to explain safety requirements. At a previous meeting, it had been suggested that this requirement could be met through the preparation of a detailed explanatory note. However, the provision of written instructions only could render the Council liable in the event of an injury or other accident.

Stapeley and District Parish Council
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	<p>One of the principal reasons for asking NTC to assist was to obviate the need for a volunteer to open up the hall. As this is now a necessity, there seems little advantage in asking casual users to collect a key from the Civic Hall.</p> <p>In addition to the above, the Legal Adviser has also said that there can be no “deemed acceptance” of the hire agreement, either via e-mail or through the on-line booking system. Each user must sign two copies, one of which is to be retained by the Parish Council. These matters need to be considered by a Committee which it is proposed be set up to discuss the future operation of the hall.</p>		
65	Annual energy usage	3,000.00	This is a “guesstimate” only as the electricity meters have not been read since the Council took on the lease in November 2012.
66	Maintenance/re-decoration	2,000.00	Maintenance will include such items as replacement of light bulbs, repairs to locks, toilets etc.
	TOTAL	<u>28,058.00</u>	

3. Income During 2014 (Calendar Year)

Until there is a satisfactory means of operating the community hall, no casual bookings can be taken. There are six regular users at present and pay the following each week:

Scouts	£18	
Yoga	£18	
Babies' play	£12	
Youth orchestra	£12	
Youth Club	£18	Total for the week = £78 x 52 weeks = £4,056
Zumba	£18 (only 38 weeks a year)	£684
TOTAL		<u>£4,740</u>

The above are not reliable calculations as all of the users cease activities at some time during the year for various reasons. This income is likely to be less. Scouts do not use the hall for some of the summer months, and the Youth Club has weekend activities elsewhere on occasions.

4. Community Hall Committee

Elsewhere on the agenda it is recommended that a Committee be established, with delegated powers to make decisions. As the lease is not yet signed, the Committee can consider matters in more detail and report on the expected viability, or otherwise, of the community hall during 2014.

Carol Jones
Clerk
2 January 2014