

Date:	5 October 2017
Title:	Report Item 7 – Budget for Projects
By:	Cllr Stewart Fuller
Purpose of Report:	To identify a number of project-type items for inclusion in the forthcoming budget round
Recommendations:	For the PC to consider/action the points under each project heading

The 2018/19 Budget and precept will be approved at the January 2018 PCM. That meeting will also review and note the forward three years' forecasts. As a run-up to the January Budget approval the first draft budget will be available for the November PCM, followed by a fine-tuned version for the December PCM before the final version is issued for January.

The purpose of this paper is to consider a number of expenditure items to be included in the budget, some of which need to be approved at this October PCM. All the items listed will have an allowance included in the 2018/19 Budget, and subsequent forward years, subject to the outcome of any actions listed under the headings below.

Playground Upgrade

The September PCM supported the phased approach to the playground upgrade (Minute C.427 – Report 7) with the initial Phase based on a quote from Proludic of £35k excl VAT. This amount, together with an allowance for renewal of fencing around the Playground, will be included in the Budget for 2018/19. We also need to determine whether a Phase II should be included in the forward view. Although we are looking for grant funding to support the project, receipt of such funding is not a pre-requisite for proceeding with the project.

Action for PCM

- a) to **approve** Phase I of the project based on the quote from Proludic with a target completion date of Q2 2018, and to accept that quotation
- b) **decide** whether or not Phase II should be included in the forward view

Friston Build-out

The September PCM supported this project (Minute 428(a) – Report 8a). The overall cost could be in the region of £10k, although there are still a number of unknowns. If the scheme went ahead we would need to meet 50% of the cost under match-funding arrangements. Further consultation will need to be carried out by the Parish (in addition to the support from the Village Meeting) to ensure that the community are fully in support of the project and the key stakeholder groups such as ESCC Road Safety Team, bus operators and South Downs National Park accept the proposals. The project will be included in the 2018/19 budget.

Action for PCM

- a) **agree** to proceed with the project and arrange for appropriate consultation

War Memorial

The major works has been completed and that remaining is the highlighting of names on the monument. If this work is not completed this year it will be included in the 2018/19 budget.

Pavilion

External works together with some window replacements have been completed. A budget allowance will be included for some possible internal redecoration in 2018/19, but any actual expenditure will need to be approved at a later PCM.

Tennis Courts

A review of the external fencing is required. During the year a suggestion was received that the floor covering of the court should be more 'user friendly'. A budget allowance will be included for some possible improvements in 2018/19, but any actual expenditure will need to be approved at a later PCM.

Public Seats

The PC owns and maintains some 30 seats around the parish. Currently the maintenance has been undertaken on an ad hoc basis by eg students who have received a small allowance per seat. Owing to the number of seats it is proposed that the maintenance is covered by a formal contract with an appropriate contractor, based on 'n' seats per annum. A budget allowance will be included for 2018/19 and a similar sum for the forward years.

Action for PCM a) **approve** the seat maintenance going to an appropriate contractor
b) **authorise** the clerk to obtain appropriate quotes

Other Assets

This heading covers Downlands Way Car Park, Friston Pond and assets on The Village Green. A nominal Budget allowance will be included for these items. Several requests were received following the closure of Michel Dene Road to make the bollards in Downlands Way retractable to allow access for emergency service vehicles in case of a repeat closure. There are a number of issues associated with such action eg ownership of Gore Park Close; control of bollards; kerb adjustments; parking restrictions in Downlands Way. No final view can be taken at this time but as usual the Budget will include a general provision which could be used if this idea progresses.

Action for PCM a) **nominate** someone to undertake a feasibility study if there is support for the retractable bollards

Grant Funding Scheme

During the current year the idea of a Grant Fund as operated by other PC's was supported in principle. The idea would be for community organisations to apply to the PC for a degree of financial support. A procedure will be issued later in the year and will include a formal application, all of which would be considered by a working group or the full council at a specified time of the year. This Budget heading will also cover our Charity of the Year which usually receives some £500pa plus proceeds from any PC fund raising activity (eg Village Fete). Also during the year it was suggested that the PC supports the East Dean Responders by way of a match funding initiative; this, too, will be covered by this budget heading. A budget allowance will be included for 2018/19 and a similar sum for the forward years.

Action for PCM a) **approve** the introduction of a Grant Fund effective from 2018/19

Mowing Contact

This contract is issued for a period of three years, the current term ending in March 2018. During the year there have been a number of additions to the contract specification (eg verge cutting). The spec needs to be reviewed, and in particular the PC needs to consider whether or not the mowing of private greens (Village Green owned by the Gilbert Estate and the Greensward owned by East Dean Greensward Co Ltd) should continue to be included – DEFRA's advice is that such greens should NOT be maintained from public funds. Once the spec is determined, ideally we should go out to tender but experience with ESCC has shown that meeting their stringent requirements is not a straight-forward task. Subject to the Financial Regulations it is therefore suggested that the existing supplier is approached for a renewal/update of the existing contract with minimal increase in fees.

Action for PCM

- a) **decide** whether or not private greens should be included in the next mowing contact
- b) **update** the spec for the mowing contract
- c) **authorise** the clerk to contact the current provider with the aim of obtaining a quotation for the next three years by end November for inclusion in the budget

Estate Road Signage

The road signs on the Downlands Estate are currently maintained by the Residents' Association. Although this work has been undertaken by members of the RA, the scope is such that it should probably fall to a contractor with experience in working on the highways. The Roads Co has disclaimed responsibility for this activity although it does receive road maintenance monies from Estate residents. The suggestion has been made that the PC could take over responsibility for these signs and set up a relationship with an appropriate contractor.

Action for PCM

- a) **decide** whether or not the PC should take over responsibility for road signs on the Downlands Estate
- b) subject to a), **consider** asking the RA and Roads Co. for a donation towards the works

Other Budget Items

Regular recurring items and new smaller budget items will be included along with all the above in the first budget-pass review for the November PCM.
