

CREECH ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes for the Meeting of Creech St Michael Parish Council Finance Committee
held at Creech St Michael Village Hall on **Monday 21 November 2024 at 7.00pm**

Councillor Attendance

Cllr. David Griffin – Chair	DG	Present	Cllr. Neil Davidson – Vice Chair	ND	Present
Cllr. Annabelle Peters	AP	Present	Cllr. Paul Tucker	PT	Present

Also Present: Andrew Williams, Creech St Michael Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

Meeting started at 7.03pm

1.0	Chair's welcome				
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.				
2.0	Public Question time - Questions asked by the Public and Press will be noted.				
	None.				
3.0	To receive any apologies for absence				
	None.				
4.0	Declarations of Interests				
	4.1 Declarations of Individual Members				
	None.				
	4.2 Dispensation Request				
	None.				
5.0	Minutes				
	To Review and Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2024. [M] The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 July 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.				
	Prop:DG	Sec:PT	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0
6.0	Bank Reconciliation – to approve the bank reconciliation for the period ending 30 September 2024. [M] The bank reconciliation for the three-month period ending 30 September 2024 was scrutinised and the accuracy of the reconciliation was confirmed and approved.				
	Prop:DG	Sec:AP	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0
7.0	External Audit – to receive the external audit report for the year ending 31 March 2024. [M] The Clerk and RFO explained the findings of the external auditor report and provided an explanation of the one issue raised within the report. The external audit report was accepted and approved.				
	Prop:AP	Sec:PT	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0
8.0	Internal Audit – to approve a proposal to seek a new internal auditor for the year ending 31 March 2025. [M] It was agreed that it was in the interests of the Parish council to seek a new internal auditor to maintain the integrity of the internal audit process. The proposal was approved.				
	Prop:ND	Sec:DG	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0

9.0	<p>Budget 2025/26 – to consider and approve the budget guidance and proposals for the 2025/26 financial year. [M] The Clerk and RFO set out the timescales involved in the budget setting process, confirming that the draft budget would be considered by the Parish Council at its December meeting.</p> <p>Members agreed that the Parish Council could no longer allow day-to-day business to be funded from reserves as this would deplete all reserves within a short period of time. It was agreed that only specific projects would be funded from reserves.</p> <p>It was noted that a payment from Somerset Council from the Community Infrastructure Levy fund. The amount and timing of the payment was yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO was asked to prepare a draft budget for consideration by the Parish Council based on the proposals received. The proposal was approved.</p>				
	Prop:DG	Sec:AP	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0
10.0	<p>Business Continuity Plan – to consider the draft business continuity plan. [M] The Business Continuity Plan was approved for consideration by the Parish council.</p>				
	Prop:DG	Sec:AP	In Favour:4	Against:0	Abstain:0
	Items for Discussion				
11.0	<p>VAT Return – to note the VAT return submitted for the second quarter of 2024/25. The VAT return was noted by the meeting.</p>				
12.0	Correspondence				
	<p>12.1 To consider any correspondence received that Councillors wish to raise that has already been circulated. None.</p>				
	<p>12.2 To note items of correspondence received by the Clerk and RFO deemed appropriate to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council. None.</p>				
13.0	New Matters to be Carried Forward				
	None.				

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

[M] = Where a resolution (vote) is expected

Andrew Williams, Creech St Michael Parish Council, Clerk and RFO, 07708 680797, email clerk@creechstmichael.net

The next Creech St Michael (CSM) Parish Council meetings are on;

04 November 2024

at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall

Item 7.

Budget & Precept Request

1.0 Proposal

To approve the draft budget for the financial year 2025/26 and approve the precept request for the 2025/26 financial year.

2.0 Introduction

The draft budget has been prepared using all available current information, but it should be noted that there is still a high level of uncertainty around the financial position of Somerset Council and the ongoing impact of that on local services. The hoped for clarification on the devolution of services from the Unitary Authority has not materialised, due in part to the lack of a funding settlement for Somerset Council from central government at the point this paper was prepared.

The draft budget aims to position the Parish Council to a point whereby it is not relying on reserves to fund day-to-day activity, holding reserves only for specific tasks or projects. In future years, the aim has to be to bolster reserves to strengthen the position of the Parish Council and to allow it to embark on significant projects to support the community.

Two-thirds of the proposed budget is allocated to employment costs and management of the Rec. Park (excluding a sum for play equipment repairs). The budget for the Rec. Park for the 2025/26, when repairs to play equipment are excluded, has been reduced by 9%. The budget for employment costs has increased by 11%, of which more than a quarter is accounted for in the increase in Employers National Insurance Contributions, announced in the recent budget.

Note: (1) All figures used in this paper are inclusive of VAT. (2) Funds held for the Party in the Park Group are excluded from this budget process. The funds held currently stand at £11,665.55.

3.0 Reserves

It is projected that reserves held at the end of the current financial year will be £79,500.00, excluding Community Infrastructure Level funds. At the end of the 2022/23 financial year reserves held were £104,163.00.

The draft budget allocates the reserves in the following way.

- £20,000.00 for operating contingency.
- £15,000.00 for repairs to play equipment.
- £5,000.00 as a fund to provide for legal and professional fees for the Langaller Park application.
- £2,000.00 as a general fund for use for legal and professional fees for planning applications.
- £37,500.00 allocated to general reserves.

A comparison of reserves held by Parish Councils of a similar size

Parish Council	2023/24 Precept	Reserves 2023/24	Ratio of Reserves to Precept
Bishop's Hull	£37,000.00	£89,000.00	2.4
Bishops Lydeard (grouped with Cothelstone)	£68,000.00	£701,000.00	10.3
Bridgwater Without	£42,000.00	£35,195.00	0.84
Creech St. Michael	£75,000.00	£101,000.00	1.35
Huish Episcopi	£73,000.00	£183,000.00	2.50
Milborne Port	£133,000.00	£130,000.00	0.97
Watchet	£193,000.00	£192,000.00	0.99
Wiveliscombe	£54,000.00	£169,000.00	3.12

Note: Comparison is based on Parish tax base between 1,000 and 1,300 for the 2023/24 year. Reserves data is taken from published AGAR returns and may include CIL funds.

The median average of reserves held by the parishes listed was £115,000.00 on a precept of £61,000.00 which is a ratio of 1.89. Based on the projected reserves for year end and including CIL funds, the Parish Council's reserves to precept request ratio for the end of the 2024/25 year will be 1.

4.0 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds

The amount of funds allocated to the Parish Council from Somerset Council under the Community Infrastructure Levy scheme currently stands at £44,448.25. These funds need to be spent and accounted for by the end of the 2029/2030 financial year. It is expected that further payments in the region of £100,000.00 will be received within the next 12 to 18 months. These funds are linked to payments made from the Coronation Way development.

A reminder that CIL funds are intended to be used to fund "the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that [a] development places on the area."

5.0 The Budget

5.1 Payroll (Cost Centre 1000)

The budget allocation for payroll is based on the following assumptions.

- That all current posts remain on the same terms and conditions.
- That all employees will be awarded one incremental point increase in salary against the national pay scales.
- That the nationally agreed pay award is no greater than that allocated in the current year at £1,290.00.

The increase in costs from the previous year is £5,925.76 or 11%.

Note: The increase announced by the Government to the Employer's National Insurance rates account for £1,528.10 of the additional costs.

5.2 Recruitment & Training (Cost Centre 2000)

No change.

5.3 Administration (Cost Centre 3000)

The allocation for this cost centre has been kept at a steady state with the exception of the following.

- 3005 Memberships & Subscriptions – increased to take account of additional costs related to subscriptions for Parish Online and Civic.ly applications and expected increases in fees for Somerset Association of Local Councils.
- 3003 Internal Audit – increased by £150.00 from £200.00 to £350.00 to account for a change of internal auditor.

Projected VAT repayments are estimated at a lower level than the current year as a consequence of expected lower charges for Rec. Park equipment repairs.

5.4 Insurance (Cost Centre 4000)

The allocation has been increased to take account of a new contract that is to be negotiated. This exposes the Parish Council to a risk of an increase in fees as it has been shielded from market fluctuations as a result of the previous long-term contract with Zurich. An increase of just under 20% has been built in.

5.5 Recreation Park (Cost Centre 5000)

The budget for the Rec. Park has been reduced by 9% as a result of some cost savings and some re-prioritisation. The allocation includes the following items.

- £2,000.00 for additional works to the tree population.
- £15,000.00 from reserves for play equipment repairs or replacement.
- £5,000.00 to support a project to undertake an appraisal of how the park is utilised and what options the space and buildings could present for development and greater utilisation.

5.6 Canal Car Park (Cost Centre 6000)

A sum of £1,000.00 has been allocated to fund further works to the tree population.

5.7 Allotments (Cost Centre 7000)

The budget for the allotments is neutral as we pay the rental to the landowner and then the Allotment Society pay us the same amount.

5.8 Phone Boxes & Defibs. (Cost Centre 8000)

No change.

5.9 Waste Disposal (Cost Centre 9000)

The dog waste budget is set based on the current commitment to four bins emptied twice per week, assuming there will be a modest rise in charges.

5.10 Burial Ground (Cost Centre 10000)

Unchanged.

5.11 Bus Stops (Cost Centre 11000)

Includes an increase in the fees charged for cleaning of the bus shelters.

5.12 Capital Expenditure (Cost Centre 12000)

No budget allowed.

5.13 Grants (Cost Centre 13000)

No budget allowed.

5.14 Youth Provision (Cost Centre 14000)

An allocation of £4,300.00 to provide for services for children and young people, as part of the requested contribution from the LCN for all parishes to set aside a proportion of their precept based on population data. The number of children aged 15 and under within the parish at the latest census date was 534.

The funds will be used to provide a range of services across the Parish and LCN targeted at children and young people (see LCN CYP Working group update attached).

5.15 Events

A reduction of £200.00 on the previous year. This allocation includes an amount of £300.00 for the Family Fun Day and amounts for the Easter and Christmas Fairs.

5.16 Highways and PRW

In the current year a sum of £25,000.00 was allocated for highways, including the installation of new Speed Indicator Device sites and a sum for the shared Highways Warden scheme. This year's allocation is significantly reduced as it has become apparent that the Highways Warden scheme has not been taken up within the LCN and individual parishes. A sum of £10,000.00 has been allocated for highways works and expected works to maintain public rights of way. A sum of £2,000.00 has been allocated for new Speed Indicator Device sites.

6. Precept Request

The precept request for the 2025/26 financial year is £123,075.00. This represents an increase of 36.4% on the request for the 2024/25 financial year. The average band D property within the Parish will see an increase of £28.15 per year in the precept element for the Parish Council in their Council Tax bill.

Five Year Precept

Year	Amount	% Change on Previous Year
2021/22	£57,985.00	-
2022/23	£68,000.00	+17.27%
2023/24	£74,528.00	+9.60%
2024/25	£90,225.00	+21.06%
2025/26	£123,075.00	+36.40%

Recommendation

That the budget and precept request are considered and approval is given for a precept request.

Andrew Williams
Clerk and RFO
21.11.2024

Creech St Michael Parish Council

25 November 2024 (2025-2026)

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
1001	Salaries			50,180.99	26,441.48					52,100.00					
1002	Tax & NI			2,931.77	7,661.21					6,850.00					
1003	Pension Contributions			1,011.48	1,301.64					1,100.00					
SUB TOTAL				54,124.24	35,404.33					60,050.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
2001	Recruitment Costs			250.00						250.00					
2002	Employee Training Co			500.00	210.00					500.00					
2003	Member Training			500.00	556.70					500.00					
SUB TOTAL				1,250.00	766.70					1,250.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
3001	General Administratior			1,500.00	807.09					1,500.00					
3002	Venue Hire			1,000.00	506.75					1,000.00					
3003	Internal Audit			200.00	170.00					350.00					
3004	External Audit			450.00	420.00					500.00					
3005	Membership & Subscr			1,500.00	1,502.65					2,800.00					
3006	Bank Charges			400.00	228.15					400.00					
3007	Printing			300.00						300.00					

Creech St Michael Parish Council

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

3008	External Communicati			200.00						200.00		
3009	External Communicati	100.00		1,000.00	180.00		100.00			1,000.00		
3010	Postage			50.00	68.19					50.00		
3011	Website Hosting			200.00						200.00		
3012	Planning Support			2,000.00						2,000.00		
3013	Sub Contracted Staff											
3014	Other Income											
3015	Lottery	60.00	31.00					60.00				
3016	VAT		5,255.24					4,000.00				
3017	Mobile Phone Charge:			250.00	110.80					250.00		
3018	Langaller Park Suppor			5,000.00						5,000.00		
SUB TOTAL		160.00	5,286.24	14,050.00	3,993.63			4,160.00		15,550.00		

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Insurance		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
4001	Insurance Premium			4,200.00	3,984.63					5,000.00					
SUB TOTAL				4,200.00	3,984.63					5,000.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Recreation Park		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
5001	Grounds Maintenance			5,800.00	4,696.74					5,500.00					
5002	Grounds Maintenance			800.00	195.34					600.00					
5003	Utilities (Electricity)		126.31	1,499.00	518.93					400.00					
5004	Utilities (Water)			100.00	34.21					100.00					
5005	Utilities (Gas)														

Creech St Michael Parish Council

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

5006	Utilities (Waste Dispos									
5007	Waste Disposal (Septi									
5008	Waste Disposal (Gene		100.00					100.00		
5009	Consumables		1,200.00	328.68				600.00		
5010	Maintenance Equipme		500.00	26.64				500.00		
5011	Repairs & Maintenanc		5,000.00	4,656.92				15,000.00		
5012	Repairs & Maintenanc		1,250.00	292.19				500.00		
5013	Repairs & Maintenanc		1,000.00					500.00		
5014	Improvements		4,500.00	2,851.91						
5015	Security	-7.50	8,000.00	4,969.78				8,500.00		
5016	Play Equipment Inspe		2,500.00					2,500.00		
5017	Pitch Fees	800.00	75.00			600.00				
5018	Stage Hire	100.00								
5019	Safety Clothing/Equipr		100.00					100.00		
5020	Rental Charges	1,000.00	606.37			700.00				
5021	Improvement Project							5,000.00		
SUB TOTAL		1,900.00	800.18	32,349.00	18,571.34	1,300.00		39,900.00		

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year	
Canal Car Park		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
6001	Maintenance			1,500.00	925.00					1,000.00	
6002	Security				140.98						
SUB TOTAL				1,500.00	1,065.98					1,000.00	

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
7001	Rental	800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00				800.00					
SUB TOTAL		800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00	800.00				800.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
8001	Phonebox Maintenan			100.00						100.00					
8002	Defib Consumables			200.00						200.00					
8003	Defib Maintenance			200.00						200.00					
SUB TOTAL				500.00						500.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
9001	Dog Waste			3,500.00	1,626.56					4,000.00					
9002	General Waste			200.00						200.00					
SUB TOTAL				3,700.00	1,626.56					4,200.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

10001 Burial Ground		685.00	685.00		685.00
SUB TOTAL		685.00	685.00		685.00

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Bus Stops		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
11001	Cleaning			350.00	375.00					500.00					
11002	Maintenance			200.00						200.00					
SUB TOTAL				550.00	375.00					700.00					

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Capital Expenditure		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
12001	Tools														
12002	Waste Bin Installation														
12003	Other			5,700.00											
SUB TOTAL				5,700.00											

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Grants		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
13001	Community Developm			3,000.00											
13002	S137 Grants			1,500.00	200.00										
17002	Parish Grant														

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

SUB TOTAL		4,500.00		200.00											
		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Youth Provision		Receipts		Payments		Receipts				Payments				Receipts	Payments
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
14001	Service Delivery Char														
14002	Venue Hire														
14003	Donations & Grants				100.00					4,300.00					
SUB TOTAL				100.00						4,300.00					
		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
Events		Receipts		Payments		Receipts				Payments				Receipts	Payments
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
15001	PiP Ticket Sales														
15002	PiP Event Sales														
15003	PiP Concession Fees														
15004	PiP Expenditure Event														
15005	PiP Other Events														
15010	Christmas Fayre			300.00						300.00					
15011	Easter Fayre			300.00						300.00					
15012	Other Events		255.16	1,000.00	455.16					500.00					
15090	Family Fun Day									300.00					
SUB TOTAL		255.16		1,600.00		455.16				1,400.00					

Creech St Michael Parish Council

25 November 2024 (2025-2026)

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
16001	Pavilion Refurbishmer														
16003	CIL Receipts		45,409.94												
16004	CCTV Purchase				1,133.08										
16005	Mower Purchase				961.69										
16006	CIL Defib Installation				300.00										
SUB TOTAL			45,409.94		2,394.77										

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
17001	Precept	90,551.52	90,552.00			123,075.00									
SUB TOTAL		90,551.52	90,552.00			123,075.00									

		Last Year 2024-2025				Current Year 2025-2026				Next Year					
		Receipts		Payments		Receipts		Payments		Receipts	Payments				
Code	Title	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Actual	Forecast	Total	Budget	Budget
19001	Maintenance			3,000.00	116.00					10,000.00					
19002	SID Site Installation			2,000.00						2,000.00					
19003	Shared Costs Highway			10,000.00											
SUB TOTAL				15,000.00	116.00					12,000.00					

Detailed Budget Summary

All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/11/2025 and 31/03/2026)

Summary

TOTAL	93,411.52	143,103.52	140,508.24	70,539.10	129,335.00	147,335.00
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