

Indicative capital programme

1. The Council is asked to consider capital expenditure in 2021-22 and beyond.
2. The Council agreed at its September 2019 meeting a list of the potential cost of capital projects to which it was committed, an indicative capital programme.
3. The Council felt then it was committed in some way or other to the following items of capital expenditure:
 - a) Implementation of 30mph speed limit on Hinksey Hill
 - b) Laying out new burial ground plots
 - c) New website
 - d) Replacing ash trees in the woodland
 - e) Burial ground path.

4. After discussion, the Council agreed the following indicative capital programme:

Item	Amount
Path	£4,000
30mph speed limit	£3,500 for four years
Burial plots	£2,500
Website	£500
Total committed	£21,000

5. One of these projects, the new website, has been completed and no further capital spending is anticipated in relation to it.
6. The Council's unrestricted reserves stood at £12,185.33 at the start of the financial year 2020-21.

a) Implementation of 30mph speed limit on Hinksey Hill

7. The County Council implemented a 30mph speed limit on Hinksey Hill on the basis that the Council would make a one-off payment of £3,360.69 in 2019-20 and five annual payments of £3,000 payable on 1st April from 2020 to 2024.
8. The Council made the first of the five annual payments at its March 2020 meeting and the next payment is due to be made at its March 2021 meeting. The third payment of £3,000 is due to be made at the

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Council's March 2022 meeting and is included in the draft 2021-22 budget before the meeting.

b) Laying out new burial ground plots

9. The Council engaged what is now called The CDS Group to put forward proposals to lay out new burial plots in what is currently the wildflower area of the burial ground. The company's initial quotation itemised costs totalling £4,760.
10. The Council has so far paid £580 for a topographic survey and has agreed to pay an additional £1,500 for a Tier 1 Groundwater Risk Assessment, which is likely to be invoiced well before the end of 2020-21.
11. This leaves £4,180 which must probably be paid before the end of 2021-22 and only covers the cost of the project up to tender stage for the work. The draft budget before the meeting includes £5,500 as an estimate for the cost of the project in 2021-22.

c) Replacing ash trees in the woodland

12. The Council was advised that ash dieback was established in the woodland and that most of the ash trees will die. Half of the trees in the woodland are understood to be ash.
13. The Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, which manages the woodland for the Council, obtained The Forestry Commission's agreement to begin clearing of the diseased ash trees and their replacement with a variety of native species.
14. The first two areas of diseased ash trees were removed and replaced in March 2020 just before the first national lockdown at no cost to the Council. It is still not yet clear what net cost, if any, of the full replacement will ultimately fall on the Council.
15. In any case, at the start of the current financial year the Council's woodland restricted reserve stood at £3,178.

d) Burial ground path

16. Father James Wilkinson passed onto the Council an estimate of £18,746.80 for the total cost of constructing a path from Parker Road to St Lawrence Road.
17. The Council has in the past committed itself to pay for the whole cost of the portion of the path that crosses the burial ground and to make a contribution towards the cost of the rest of the path. Figures

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such as £4,000 and £1,000 respectively have been quoted in the past.

18. Arguably, the portion of the path that crosses the burial ground makes little sense on its own. It is the construction of a path from the porch of St Laurence's Church to Parker Road that is potentially of interest to the Council because it would be of benefit to:
 - The residents of the village – because it might make visitors to the church less likely to park in St Lawrence Road
 - Pall bearers – because it would make it easier and safer to carry coffins from the church to the graveside.
19. The project is an initiative of the church and it remains to be seen whether the current vicar will pursue it, how much it might now cost and what funds the church may be able to raise towards the cost.
20. There is some doubt as to whether it is lawful for a parish council to make a payment to a church. Both the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks advise that it is not.
21. The Chairman and Vice-Chair **propose** that the Council:
 - a) Have the burial ground section of the path constructed as part of the work to implement the design for the unused area of the burial ground
 - b) Advise St Laurence's that if it wishes to see a path constructed as far as the church porch, that would be the time to do it.

e) **Indicative capital programme**

22. An updated indicative capital programme starting in 2021-22 might therefore now be:

Item	Amount
Burial plots & path	£9,500
30mph speed limit	£3,000 for further three years
Total committed	£18,500

f) Community Infrastructure Levy

23. In October 2020 the Council received its first share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a sum of £4,002.80, in respect of a development at a property on Hinksey Hill.
24. The Chairman and the Vice-Chair **propose** that the Council consider spending some of the CIL it has already received and will probably receive in future years on:
 - a) The replacement of community noticeboards
 - b) The purchase of planters or hanging baskets for the Village and the Hill.

Geoffrey Ferres
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Saturday 5th December 2020