

## November 2023 Budget Report for 2024/25

By Sarah Hunt

The Council last year replicated the budget from 2022/23 with a slight increase. It was without a clerk and needed to set the budget very quickly following my arrival. I am projecting a loss this year of around £2,000.00.

As a Council you have no earmarked reserves – these should be identified and added to annually to build a reserve for any large items of expenditure – the play area replacement etc. I would expect at a minimum to see elections, staffing, play area, defibrillator etc and a small amount being added annually to a sinking fund. You have none at Field Dalling. I have allowed £1,000 in the figures to start to build this reserve.

As a smaller council you should have between 3 and 12 months expenditure in a 'general reserve' – this is unspent money to be carried forward, but with no ear marked spend attached. It protects you against the principal authority failing to pay across the precept in time, and gives you reserves that would cover unexpected bills.

Your major expenditure is me. I don't know why it was only 936 pounds in 2022/23. There has been a national salary increase this year, and is likely to be one next year. I have allowed for this in the figures.

I am contractually entitled to a scale point increase in April, but will not be asking Council to implement this. I have budgeted to remain at scale point 26.

You have asked me to look at 50/50 funding for a SAM2 and highways gateways;

Highways have confirmed that you can have one set at Langhams road – these are around £2800, therefore it will be an additional £1,400 on the precept.

A SAM2 will come in at around £3,600, needing an £1,800 contribution from you.

If you decide to go for either (or both) of these projects we will need to add them into the figures to allow for them. I will then get firm prices and submit an application.