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| **Explanation for Significant Differences 2019-20** |

# 2018-19

In 2018-19 there were no additional Items of Income and Expenditure, which were thus both fairly typical.

# 2019-20

In contrast, in 2019-20 the Parish Council’s normal Income and Expenditure were distorted by Grants from GAMP for Tree Maintenance, and from Groundworks UK for Consultancy in support of the developing Middridge Neighbourhood Plan.

Moreover, the Parish Council made the first of two large payments for the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with DCC to retain the Walkers Lane Street Lights. However, it should be noted that a significant part of this payment is VAT, which the Parish Council will be able to reclaim next Financial Year.

If these factors are taken into account, it can be seen that the Parish Council’s underlying Income and Expenditure have not altered substantially.

# Website Hosting

When the Village Website was first established, Parish Councillor W. Mellors arranged the necessary Website Hosting, which was charged to his personal BT Account. However, in 2014 it was decided that this was not only unfair to Councillor Mellors, but could cause problems in the event of him ceasing to be a Parish Councillor for any reason. Consequently what was believed to be a separate BT Account was organised, so that the Parish Council paid for future Website Hosting (by Direct Debit)..

This arrangement worked without problems until December 2019, when the Parish Council suddenly paid a large Bill of £302.76, (rather than the £21.60 expected). On investigation, it was discovered that the Website Hosting Account was actually a Sub-Account of Councillor Mellors’ personal BT Account, and BT had amalgamated all his Charges into one new Account, which was charged to the Parish Council! BT promised to sort this problem out, but unfortunately in March 2020 the Parish Council again paid a large Bill of £318.89 (rather than the £21.60 expected).

The Parish Council then cancelled their BT Direct Debit, so this problem cannot occur again. It transpires that BT no longer provide Website Hosting for new Customers, and hence the Parish Council have organised a new Website Hosting Provider (Zen Internet) in order to maintain operation of the Village Website (which is now a legal requirement for a Parish Council).

Despite Councillor Mellors best endeavours, BT could only confirm that some £542.62 of the total payments made by the Parish Council were for his personal BT Services, leaving a discrepancy of £35.83 unaccounted for (assuming the normal payments of £43.20 for Website Hosting). Since this matter was causing Councillor Mellors considerable distress, the Parish Council eventually agreed that they would accept his one-off payment of £542.62 to settle the matter.

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# Financial Reserves

Due to the Walkers Lane Street Lighting SLA payment, the Parish Council ‘s previously abnormally high overall Financial Reserves have been restored to a more sensible level. However, it should be noted that these will be substantially reduced next Financial Year, when the second (final) large SLA payment is due.

Thereafter the Parish Council plan to restore their Financial Reserves to a prudent level, and then review their Precept, bringing this back into line with their normal Expenditure. An important factor in this decision will be that as the increasing number of new Residents of “Elder Gardens” begin to pay the Precept, the Parish Council’s Income will increase substantially, without any corresponding increases in their Expenditure.