

Briefing Note

Financial Report Year End 2024-25

21 April 2025

1.0 Cash and Bank Reconciliation

The year-end bank reconciliation is complete and shows the year beginning with £16,120.90 in cash and ending with £15,198.98, a difference of £-921.92. This decrease is mainly due to grants made to community organisations from ringfenced funds held for that purpose.

2.0 Reserves

At year end the total for reserves and ringfenced funds is £15,198.98, which is the total cash held by the council. Parish councils do not carry unallocated cash over to the next fiscal year.

St Ewe has a *contingency reserve* for unspecified over-expenditure. At year end the contingency reserve is £2,631.38. The *election reserve* has remained the same at £3,345.00. It is held in case of a contested election; however, this May 2025 the poll for St Ewe Parish Council is uncontested. The *noticeboard reserve* began at £1,209.33, but has not been needed, so it (along with the ringfenced Emergency Fund) was used to pay for First Aid training. The *noticeboard reserve* is now £958.83.

3.0 Ringfenced (earmarked) Funds

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Parish councils receive a 15% 'Neighbourhood Portion' of the CIL income raised in the parish. The county council receives 85%. CIL should be spent on "infrastructure needed to support development" and the council has five years to spend the money.

St Ewe started the year with £3,749.93 in CIL funds. These funds were used for a new Village Hall boiler and for the Gorran Pre-school play area. The fund now stands at £837.43 and a year-end CIL report is posted on the council's website.

St Ewe Climate Action Group (SECAG) funds

SECAG was formed in November 2020 to address the climate emergency at the parish level. The fund remains unchanged at £34.96. Any interested people are welcome to join SECAG.

Emergency Fund

This fund was granted to the parish council after it completed its Emergency Plan and was ringfenced for related expenditure. The last of the fund (£169.50) was used to partially fund Emergency First Aid training.

The Aura Wind Turbine Fund

No payments were made from this fund in 2024-25 and at year end the fund stands at £7,006.94. St Ewe's Grant Application form is available on the website for any organisation that has a project that will directly benefit St Ewe parishioners.

Transparency Fund

The transparency fund remains at £109.40 to purchase a printer/scanner, for the clerk's office, but it is still not needed.

St Ewe Defibrillator

The parish council replaced the out-of-date defibrillator pads using this fund and it is now at £275.04. Further fundraising will be needed for equipment maintenance in the future.

Three Parish Low Carbon Fund

Since 2011, a group called Transition St Goran has administered community funds from the Gorran Highlanes wind turbine project of Community Power Cornwall (CPC). It was felt that it would be better – for reasons of accountability and transparency – if the money went through a properly constituted body and in January 2025 St Ewe Parish Council agreed to take on the task by forming the *Three Parish Low Carbon Fund Committee* (see Minute 24/95.A).

The funds are ringfenced for grants toward infrastructure and activities that reduce carbon and the fund will continue as long as the turbines continue producing electricity.

As of 31st March, the Three Parish Low Carbon funds have not yet been transferred to the parish council bank account.

4.0 Budget & Precept

The *budget* for 2024-25 was £8,235, a 7.6% rise after a 1.6% reduction the previous year. The *precept* for 2024-25 was £6,796, a 4.6% rise, but because of the increased taxbase, this rise equated to an increase at Band D of 34 pence for the year.

PRECEPT.

The Precept is a tax that parish councils charge parish taxpayers in order to meet the parish council's budget requirements. Parish Councils do not receive direct funding from central government and rely on their Precept to fund their activities. The precept is calculated each year by subtracting projected receipts from projected payments.

Parish councils monitor the precept increase at the Band D property level. The precept tax paid by a Band D property is the total precept divided by the taxbase. That is in 2024-25, £6,796 was divided by the taxbase of 251.26 to give a figure of £27.05 per Band D household per year. In 2024-25 the taxbase was higher than the previous year, so the total annual impact of the rise in precept for Band D was £0.34 more than 2023-24.

5.0 Budget Comparison

The budget for 2024-25 was £8,235.

Total payments for 2024-25 are £11,737.15 (without VAT). £3,457.50 was spent from reserves and ringfenced funds, so subtracting £3,457.50 from total payments leaves £8,279.65 as payments from the 2024-25 budget.

Therefore, subtracting the payments against budget (£8, 279.65) from the budget (£8,235) shows the parish council to be £44.65 over budget.

VAT

Parish councils do not take VAT into consideration for budgeting purposes because parish councils may reclaim VAT. A VAT claim for this 2024-25 year has been submitted for £258.97.

6.0 The AGAR, the Transparency Code and audits

All councils must publish their signed Annual Return (called the AGAR or Annual Governance and Accountability Return) along with the Notice of Period for the Exercise of Public Rights.

The Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities applies to St Ewe, as its annual turnover is well under the £25,000 cut off. In accordance with the Code, the council's financial details have been published on its website since the 2014-15 financial year, and these include a list of all payments. The Code requires a list of payments over £100 and St Ewe publishes all payments.

External Audit.

At St Ewe's level of expenditure, the external audit is a 'limited review' audit. Since 2017-18, St Ewe is not required to have an external audit and, this year, the council is again able to opt out of the limited review external audit for 2024-25 (saving £210). This means that the council does not submit the AGAR to the external auditor, but the AGAR is still published on the website, along with the other documents required by the *Transparency Code*.

Internal Audit.

In accordance with Audit Regulations, all parish councils have an internal audit for assurance that the council is conducting its affairs lawfully and handling its public money properly. An independent and competent internal auditor is appointed each year by the council. The internal auditor's report forms part of the Annual Return and any issues raised by the internal auditor must be considered by the council. Internal audit is the public's assurance that its council operates lawfully and effectively.

Christine Wilson, CiLCA

Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer