

Hawthorn Parish Council

Value for Money Delivery Statement

It is the responsibility of Hawthorn Parish Council to ensure that business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for as well as being used economically, efficiently and effectively.

Value for Money does not necessarily mean lowest cost, but fair costs, reflecting the key issues and values of the Council on ethical purchasing, environment and sustainability and local economic well-being in its preference for purchasing from local suppliers.

The Council has a set of governing policy documents that provide procedural guidance for members and officers. These include the:

- Financial Regulations
- Financial procedures
- Standing orders

These are regularly reviewed and adopted by the Council.

The Financial Regulations and Standing Orders include arrangements for the management of risk, through good governance, accountability and transparency whilst also providing the mandatory framework for general procurement activities including those for contracted services and maintenance.

An internal audit is performed annually and recommendations for improvements to internal controls are implemented. An external audit is performed annually after the public have had the opportunity to inspect the year end accounts. The results of the audit are published on our website and notice boards.

The Parish Clerk who is also the appointed Responsible Financial Officer, has delegated authority to make expenditure within the set budget, significant expenditure or expenditure that falls out of the agreed budget requires authorisation by Council.

At each Council Meeting the spending from the previous period is reviewed, the expenditure is published alongside the agenda and published on our website and social media sites.

Feedback from residents is welcomed in many ways, by phone, email, through our website and in person at the public participation session which is an agenda item for every Council meeting.

The Income and Expenditure report, Balance Sheet and Reconciliations of all bank accounts and Petty Cash are reviewed at least quarterly by the full council and published on our website.

Expenditure is constantly reviewed throughout the year to identify and maximise any potential savings. This includes insurance premiums and other administrative costs. During the budget setting process all Income and Expenditure is systematically scrutinised, to ensure that all costs are competitive and deliver the best value for money and ensure that all fees and charges are fair.

Grants are awarded to charities and community groups that directly benefit Hawthorn residents. The applications are scrutinised to ensure that the grants will be used appropriately and that the funds are contributing towards a sustainable group or activity.

The Parish Council also takes every opportunity to apply for grants itself. Successful grants were received for a community defibrillator, smart TV and wireless internet, new computer equipment and spring bulbs. Application has also been made for a community greenhouse, new seats and benches, self watering tubs and more extensive bulbs and shrubs.