



Fyfield Parish Council Annual Report for 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Fyfield Parish Council	3
Who are we?	3
Managing your council	3
Some key responsibilities	3
Finances - how your money was spent	4
Highlights for 2018	5
Illegal Encampment	5
Health and Wellbeing	5
Environment	6
Crime prevention	6
Financial Highlights	6
Building Developments	6
Council Focus for 2019	7

FYFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Who are we?

- Your councilors are local residents who volunteer their time to try to make our village a better and safer place to live.
- There are seven councilors and a paid clerk.
- Councilors must apply for election every May.
- The clerk is appraised on performance and appointed each year.

Managing your council

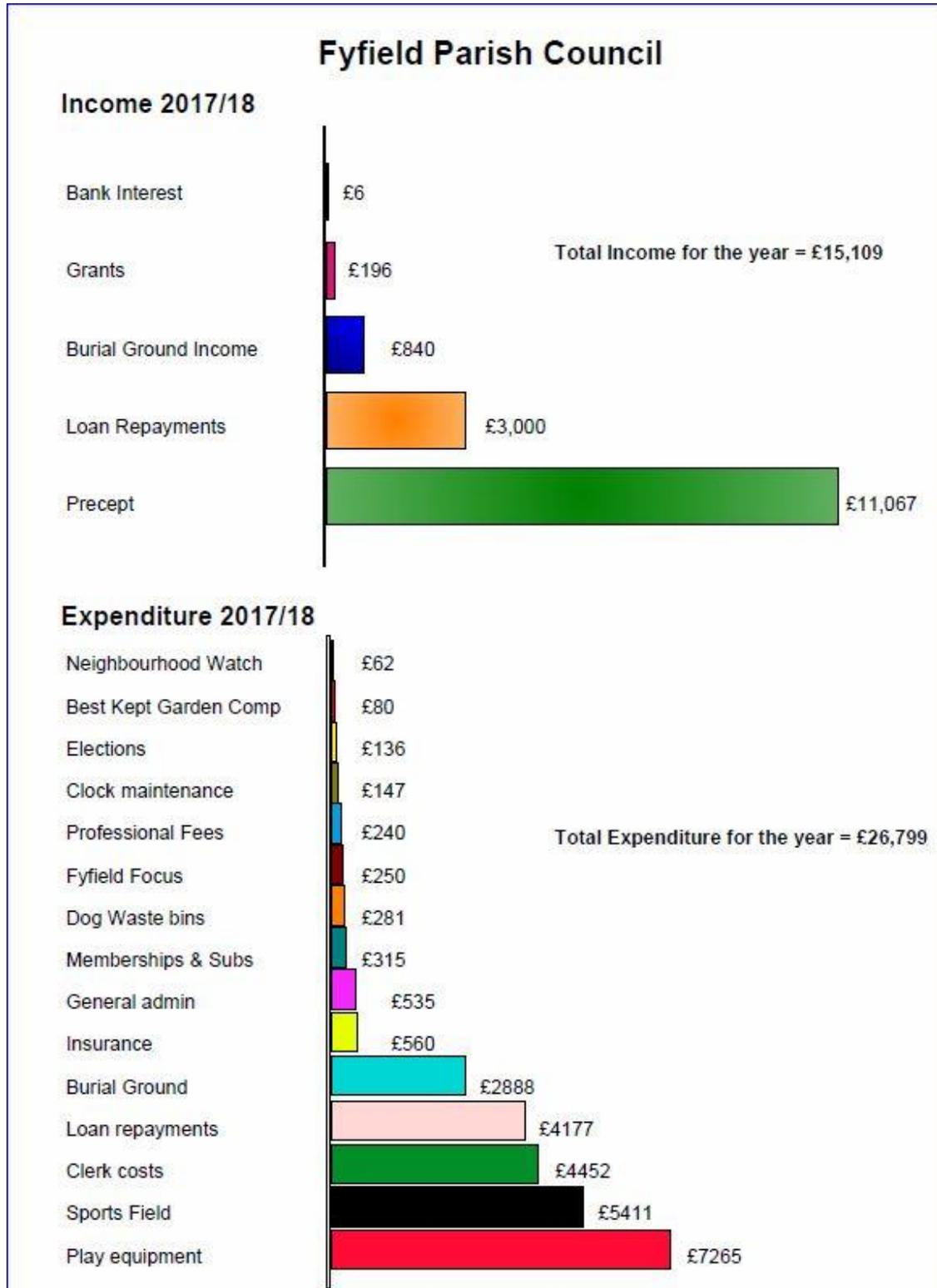
- Your council meets monthly using a published agenda and provides meeting minutes. You can read these on the council website.
- The meetings are open to residents who have the opportunity to speak and raise questions and issues.
- Because tax payer's money is involved there are strict legal processes to follow and our clerk ensures we follow them to the letter!
- Decisions made, financial controls and management of the council processes are subject to internal and external audit.

Some key responsibilities

- Review Planning Applications and feedback concerns from councilors and residents to the Epping Planning Office. Note that your council has no powers to either approve or deny a planning application.
- Although your council has no powers to prioritize the work of the Highways, Police, Planning and Environmental agencies we do communicate with them often and try to progress local issues.
- Ensure the sports field and church grounds are well maintained, dog bins emptied and the play area safe to use.
- Progress initiatives and propose new projects concerned with the village and the wellbeing of residents.
- Represent the council in other organisations and committees e.g. Fyfield Village Hall and Dr. Walkers School.
- Ensure tax payer funds are wisely spent on local matters.

Finances - how your money was spent

Nb. "Precept" is the money that comes from your council tax



HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2018

Illegal Encampment

In early 2018 your council dealt with an illegal encampment of travelers on the sports field. They were quickly removed thanks to the teamwork of your council, Fyfield Village Hall, Essex Police and Epping Forest District Council.

Our clerk said that without the focused efforts of all involved they could have been encamped there for weeks. And that in other parishes it has cost many thousands of pounds to remove them and clear up the mess.

Although the sports field was left in a terrible mess thanks to volunteers and specialist workers from EFDC all the rubbish was removed in time for a wedding in the village hall.



Health and Wellbeing

Your council started a Film Club where residents can watch a film and have lunch. It's proven to be a real success with people socializing and having a good time.



Your council fully supports the EFDC Lifewalks program and 13 walks were held in 2018.

These help people from all over the Epping district to improve their fitness.

A further 12 informal village walks were held for residents to explore our beautiful rural countryside.



Your council supports a program to improve our footpath network. Our 22 miles of paths and bridges have been transformed in 2018 due to the work of your councilors in cooperation with landowners, West Essex Rambles and Essex Highways.



Environment

Issues with flooding on the Dunmow Road continue to be a problem. The FPC are in regular contact with Essex Highways and the Environment Agency, but it is very frustrating that no real progress has been made. It's an ongoing issue the FPC will keep working on.

Crime prevention

Your council joined Fyfield to the regional Neighborhood Watch scheme. You may have noticed new Neighborhood Watch signs installed on the roads into Fyfield.



Also we have recently joined forces with Moreton and there are now 280 people reading and posting crime and other information onto our member's only Facebook page.

Your council facilitates the “Coffee with Cops” sessions at the village hall. It's your chance to talk directly to police officers about issues that concern you and our village.



Financial Highlights

The council invested in new playground equipment and picnic benches.

We identified that the charge for a burial was much lower in Fyfield than other local parishes.

So a tough decision was made in 2018 to increase the charges to be in line with those of Ongar.

Building Developments

During 2018 the council kept a close eye on the development of the EFDC Local Plan. There was a significant change made for Fyfield in cancelling a larger development for the proposed smaller Gypsy Mead site.

COUNCIL FOCUS FOR 2019

- Your council are committed to keeping the sports field and playground equipment well maintained for your enjoyment. However the income generated is small compared to the costs and this is a concern going forward.
 - The council and the village hall are working together to identify opportunities to increase the use the sports field and village hall and generate more income.
 - If you have ideas for social events, sporting activities or would like to volunteer to help please let us know.
 - PLEASE help us by coming to the various events being organized for you in 2019.
- Ensure maintenance contracts provide good value for money
- Ensure planning applications, in particular Gypsy Mead, are assessed and feedback submitted to the EFDC Planning Department.
- Within a short time the church burial grounds are likely to reach capacity. The council will survey the grounds and develop a long term plan.
- Create a Parish Appraisal questionnaire for residents to give their views on what's important for Fyfield going forward.
- Assess the benefits and potential location of a memorial tree area.
- Assess the best use of council owned land.
- Continue the voluntary work in support of council run initiatives such as the Film Club, Christmas tree event, Neighborhood Watch, footpath improvements and Lifewalks.