

Area	Num	Activity	Actual 2016/17	Planned 2017/18**	Planned 2018/19**	Planned 2019/20**	Legal obligation to provide?	Notes	
Asset maintenance	1	Parish wide vegetation control (Includes grass cutting & planting)	£7,200	£7,200	£7,200	£7,200	Yes	Across Parish, Park and allotments (includes dangerous tree removal)	
	2	Lengths-man duties	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	Yes	To focus on Highways, pavement and drainage maintenance across Parish	
	3	Dog and litter bin emptying	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	Yes		
	4	Parish Maintenance Contractor	£9,600	£9,600	£9,600	£9,600	Partial	850 hours of maintenance activities across Parish to make up for reduction in District & County services	
	5	Maintenance consumables (including licences and training)	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	Partial	Includes dog fouling, litter and replacement park signs	
	6	Play area wood chips - renew to required depth	£2,700	£2,700	£0	£0	Yes	6 loads required @ £900 (split over years 1 and 2)	
	7	Play area wood chips - annual replacement	£0	£0	£900	£900	Yes	1 load per year @ £900	
	8	Existing play equipment repaint	£0	£0	£0	£500	Partial	Specialist equipment required if we use epoxy paint	
	9	Park car-park surface renewal	£0	£0	£2,500	£2,500	Partial	Pursue Severn Trent (load cost £3500 to £4000 +VAT) plus instamac for pot holes.	
	10	Park car-park birds-mouth fencing replacement	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£0	Partial	Material cost per metre - £31.50 plastic, £20 wood plus labour costs - 125 metres required	
	11	Park entry gate replacement	£0	£0	£0	£3,000		Pursue Severn Trent for compensation.	
	12	Litter bins, dog waste bins, grit bins and benches	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	Partial	Approx £300 each (2 litter/dog waste bins, 1 new grit/salt bin, 1 replacement & 1 new bench)	
Community	13	Christmas tree	£100	£100	£100	£100			
	14	Community safety	£750	£750	£750	£750	Partial	Park ASB & drug prevention and Neighbourhood watch & Park CCTV * if anti-social behaviour continues	
	15	Annual business forum	£100	£100	£100	£100			
	16	Environment protection activities	£750	£750	£750	£750	Partial	Litter picking, wild tree planting, habitat management, wild orchid management,	
	17	War memorial / flag pole	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means *	
	18	Improved Park facilities	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means *	
	19	Community support grant fund	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500			
	20	Young persons grant fund	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000			
	21	Youth Parish Council	£250	£250	£250	£250			
Highways	22	Simple traffic calming - across the Parish	£2,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500		Physical signs, children's speed awareness, wheelie bin stickers etc	
	23	Complex traffic calming - electronic signs that display car registration	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means (£12000 per sign) solar power required	
	24	Complex traffic calming - physical road & pavement changes on Day House Bank	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means (est.£350K plus)	
	25	School crossing	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means (est. £75K)	
	26	Shop parking layout changes	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be funded by 3rd party grant or other means (est. £45K to £60K)	
Planning	27	Parish, neighbourhood and environmental plan development	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	Partial	Critical to respond to Birmingham / Dudley expansion	
	28	Planning consultancy reserves to respond to B'ham / Dudley housing expansion	£0	£3,000	£5,000	£5,000		Reserves to provided consultancy to respond to Birmingham / Dudley house building programme and threat to green belt	
Events	29	Romstock	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be self funded from revenues from year commencing 2016/17onwards	
	30	Queens Birthday celebration	£500	£0	£0	£0			
	31	Other community events	£0	£0	£0	£0		To be self funded from revenues from year commencing 2016/17onwards *	
Statutory	32	Operating costs	£17,045	£16,704	£16,370	£16,043	Yes	Includes audit, safety inspections, insurances, facilities hire, HR costs, utilities, office & communications	
		Total spending	£52,995	£54,154	£56,520	£58,693			
Revenue (not precept)	33	Revenue from events	£1,000	£1,000	£1,250	£1,500			
	34	Events sponsorship	£500	£750	£750	£750			
	35	Newsletter sponsorship	£400	£400	£400	£400			
	36	Website sponsorship	£200	£200	£200	£200			
	37	Planned other sponsorship	£50	£100	£100	£200			
	38	Lengths-man grant	£1,100	£1,100	£1,100	£1,100			
	39	Resilience grant	£0	£0	£0	£0			
	40	Allotment revenues	£250	£250	£250	£250			
	41	Bank interest	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC		To be paid into general reserves	
	42	Other 3rd party grants	£1,000	TBC	TBC	TBC		Secured £1000 from County Councilor for family seating around the park play area	
	43	From reserves	£0	£0	£0	£0			
	44	Estimated VAT refund	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC		To be paid into general reserves	
			Total revenue (before precept)	£4,500	£3,800	£4,050	£4,400		
			% increase on previous year	207.00	6.50	6.58	8.64		
Held Reserves	45	General reserve (Council contingency)	£11,913	£13,000	£14,000	£15,000			
	46	Specific reserve - (Events cash flow)	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000			
	47	Specific reserve - (Birmingham / Dudley housing expansion response)	£6,000	£9,000	£14,000	£19,000			
	48	Long term liabilities	£1,587	£1,587	£1,587	£1,587			
		Precept requested	£48,495	£50,354	£52,470	£54,293		* Dependent on community consultation via Parish planning exercise	
		Council tax support grant (from District Council)	£1,724	£1,782	£1,859	£1,968		**All figures in these columns utilise 2016 / 2017 prices	
		Actual precept	£46,771	£48,572	£50,611	£52,325			
		% increase on previous year	68.00	3.85	4.20	3.39			

Those lines in purple show budget lines that are fulfilling the election manifesto commitments made by Romsley Together candidates in the Parish Council elections May 2016.

2016/17 - Breakdown of critical budget lines

Parish wide vegetation control (lines 1): There has been a noticeable decline in the frequency of vegetation control across the Parish. In the last 12 months the Parish Council has received more correspondence and complaints about this than any other matter. The problems are occurring across the Parish affecting the park, the village gullies and many locations in the wider Parish. Lack of attention to this is creating a nuisance for residents and a number of safety and anti-social behavior issues are. By creating a specific budget and an associated vegetation control plan we will be able to introduce cyclical vegetation control in which we visit known areas before they become a problem. This budget line will also pay for the removal of a number of dangerous trees to prevent any future damage and will provide money for the replanting of appropriate flowers and plants to improve the environment we live in.

Parish Maintenance Contractor (lines 4 and 5): Local Authority budgets have been reduced by more than 30% since 2010 and this is having a significant impact on routine maintenance activities in the Parish. Many parts of the Village and Parish are looking shabby, with litter lying in hedgerows, signs going uncleaned, gullies going ungritted in winter and pavements not being cleaned. Many items of street furniture such as lights, posts and barriers are damaged or require painting. This affects everyone as a scruffy, unkempt Romsley is a less pleasant place to live and it will have a detrimental effect on our house prices (just a 1% reduction in house prices equates to a cost to our community of £1.5million pounds). To help overcome these issues the Parish Council has decided to employ a Parish Maintenance Contractor who will be a dedicated resource to improve the ambience of our village. The Parish Maintenance Contractor will undertake at least 20 hours of work each week and will be in a high visibility uniform so you can see where they are at any one time. This continuous uniformed presence in the Parish will be a visible deterrent to anti social behavior and any criminality (such as the low level drug dealing in the Park). We hope that it will help to address the reductions in Police funding and the consequential reduction in Police presence in the Parish.

Litter Bins, dog waste bins, winter grit bins and benches (line 12): We have identified several locations that would benefit from new or replacement street furniture. The normal cost of these items is around £300 and we have budgeted for 5 items per year. For 2016/17 we have secured £1000 of additional funding from the County Council to pay for improved family seating in the play area. The Parish Council is currently exploring the use of street furniture made from recycled plastic that is formed and coloured to look Brown. This is good for the environment but also reduces long-term maintenance costs as they do not rot and they do not need repainting.

Community Support Grant & Young Person's Grant funds (Lines 19 and 20): As promised in the 2015 Election the Parish Council has created two specific funds to provide small grants to people or organisations within our Parish that will provide wider benefits to our community. The Parish Council has historically considered and funded requests from the community but this had been done on an ad-hoc basis. We have now established a specific procedure with an application form that is available on the website. Through this process people or organisations asking for grants must demonstrate the benefits to the community and this will be open for scrutiny on the website.

Highways (lines 22 to 26): At several locations across the Parish we are blighted by traffic problems. These range from speeding and the absence of a school crossing to significant parking problems outside the shops. The Parish Council has opened a dialogue with the County Council on options for resolving these which is progressing and we have obtained some high level estimates for the associated cost. Unfortunately, there is no money available in the County Council for sorting these problems and the costs involved are mostly beyond the means of the Parish Council precept other than simple traffic calming. As such we are seeking other revenue streams to fund these and until these are secured we will not commit to any work, therefore they are showing as zero funded lines in the budget.

Planning (lines 27, 28 and 47): This will provide the Parish with the appropriate Parish, Neighborhood and Environmental Plans that will describe to District and County councils the types of services and the levels of development we want to see in our community. These documents are also of critical importance to any form of public or planning hearing that will oversee any submissions around the expansion of Birmingham and Dudley housing into our Parish and its greenbelt. In addition we are trying to build up a contingency reserve that we can use to pay for professional planning advice & representation to ensure the interest of Romsley's community is properly represented when Birmingham / Dudley expansion is tabled. As guidance the cost of this support to Hagley and Clent around the Cara Homes development was more than £20,000.

Events (lines 29, 30, 31 and 46): Community events are an important focal point for residents and remain very popular. In 2015 Romstock covered its costs and did not require any additional grant from the Parish Council. Going forward the Parish Council is committed to providing a variety of events that appeal across the community. This includes Romstock but we are looking at additional options in consultation with the community. However, in the future we want all events to be self financing and, where possible, to make a positive contribution to our finances. As such we have not included any events related budgets other than for a one off grant in 2016/17 to help celebrate the Queen's Birthday and the 150th anniversary of our Parish. An events reserve of £6000 has been built up from previous Romstocks and we will retain it at this level to provide a cash flow and to cover unforeseen contingencies.

Statutory duties (line 32): This line covers the statutory duties and operational costs of the Parish Council and includes the cost of our annual audit of accounts, our insurances, the cost of utilities bills, the cost of facilities and administration. These lines also include the human resource costs of the Council. We are committed to reducing these costs by 2% per annum over the next 4 years.

Revenue (lines 33 to 44): The Parish Council is working hard to identify additional revenue that will reduce the burden on the Parish precept. We have already introduced sponsorship for this newsletter and are looking to offer other sponsorship opportunities for events and services. Our intention is to generate £4,650 of additional revenue in 2016/17 which will represent a 207% increase compared to 2015/16. The Parish Council has also started applying for grants from third party organisations to fund improvements to our facilities such as the Park and we have already been successful in securing £1,000 from the County Councillor to improve seating for families around the play area.

General Reserves (line 45): The Worcestershire County Association of **Local Councils (CALC)** who provide guidance to Parish Councils recommend that reserves should be equal to 100% of the precept level. As things stand our general reserves are currently £11,913 or 25% of the 2016/17 precept amount. This is a significant shortfall and it will take us time to build the general reserves up to the best practice level. However, in the meantime, and though not ideal, we can fall back on the specific reserve accounts (lines 46 and 47) which are for Events and for Birmingham / Dudley expansion planning support in an emergency. From 2016/17 we are aiming to increase reserves by £1000 per annum from our VAT refunds and bank interest payments, we will also direct any in-year efficiencies towards the general reserve