

West Swindon Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting - 25th April 2022 6.00 pm

Present:

Parish Councillors: Cllr Suresh Gattapur, Cllr Geoff Gould, Cllr Nick Martin, Cllr Mary Martin, Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith, Cllr Keith Williams.

Paula Harrison: Parish Manager/Clerk

Residents: 4 present

Cllr Suresh Gattapur opened and Chaired the meeting.

1. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 26 April 2021** approved.
2. **West Swindon Parish Council Chairs Report – on behalf of Cllr Nigel Gibbons**

Cllr Gattapur read the following on behalf of the Chair of the Parish Council:

It has been a challenging and rewarding year for the Parish Council. This was our first full year running Parish services ourselves. This means we manage all aspects of delivering services to West Swindon residents from repairing machines and vehicles to keep them on the road every day, disposing of waste, litter and flytipping, helping residents with problems and concerns and liaising with Swindon Borough Council on important issues such as pedestrian safety and the impact of Mead Way.

Day to day, we have successfully delivered the following services across the Parish

- *Grass cutting – including trials of low mow and no mow areas*
- *Hedge & shrub cutting – we cover over 69,000 metres of hedge across the Parish*
- *Play maintenance and inspections of 21 play areas*
- *Emptying nearly 200 public bins multiple times each week*
- *Flytipping – where we can carry it*
- *Floral planting*
- *Grants including support for youth activities and library staffing*

We are hugely proud and thankful for the efforts of dozens of people across West Swindon who make a difference. Some people do this as individuals and others are managing groups. Our thanks as ever to Plastic Free Swindon, Edgehill Haven,

West Swindon FAB, Peatmoor Woodland volunteer group, Trevor Carlton at Westlea Park, the Greendown Copse group, and the Westlea, Freshbrook and Toothill volunteer litter pickers.

Commitments for 2022

We have committed to improve our communication on social media and we hope you have seen an improvement. progressed our plans to develop a multi wheels track to extend the skatepark at Rivermead. We were determined to fund this and secured external funding from the Landfill Tax grant and were further supported by Councillors direct fund raising. The new track should be ready for use by the Summer holidays this year.

We will also be making changes to Bess Road toddler play area, Plattes Close toddler play area and Shaw Ridge play areas.

Challenges for 2022

Just like every household, we will have to weather the financial uncertainties ahead however we feel reasonably prepared.

We still have challenges with graffiti across the Parish. The team will aim to tackle this over the warmer months when walls are dry.

We are also continuing to experience problems with residents freely dumping green waste in public open spaces – often behind their garden fences. We also have regular areas that continue to fly tip and litter. We will continue to try and partner with Swindon Borough Council to bring about enforcement where possible.

We know long stay parking by HGVs is an issue and welcome the opportunity to engage with Swindon Borough Council on this.

3. Update by Paula Harrison – Clerk to West Swindon Parish Council

The Clerk reported that in setting the Precept for the current financial year, the Parish Council had to plan around rising staff costs – as part of the national pay award and the increase in the cost of materials – for example, the price of steel is currently reported to be 130% higher than it was 12 months ago. Additionally the Parish Council will experience cost increases in our consumption of fuel. Taking this into account, the Parish Council set a precept increase of 3% on the overall budget (3.2% on Band D

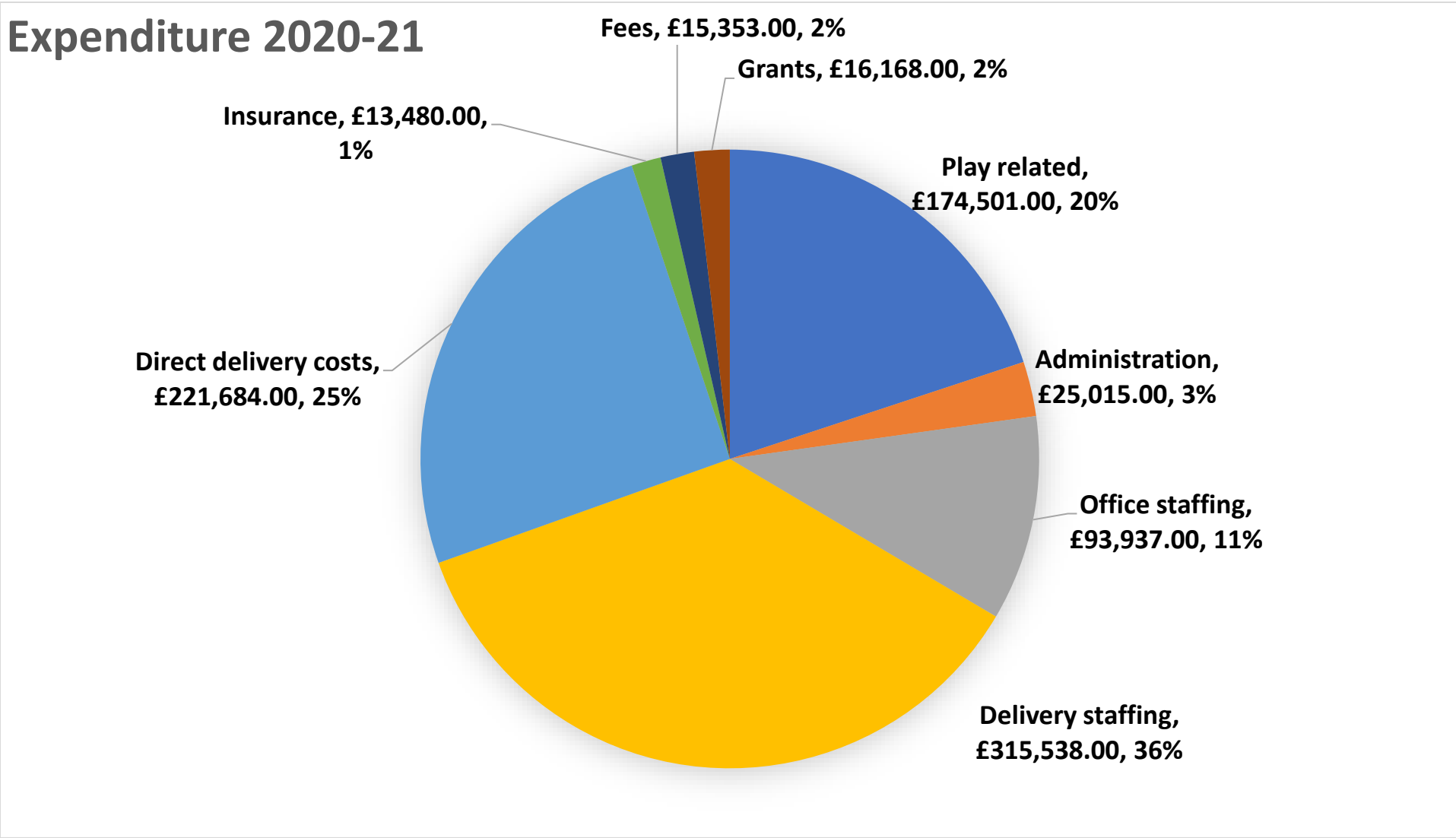
equivalent). This achieves a total of Precept income as £926,868.00. The Parish Manager shared slides attached as Appendix A.

4. Public Questions:

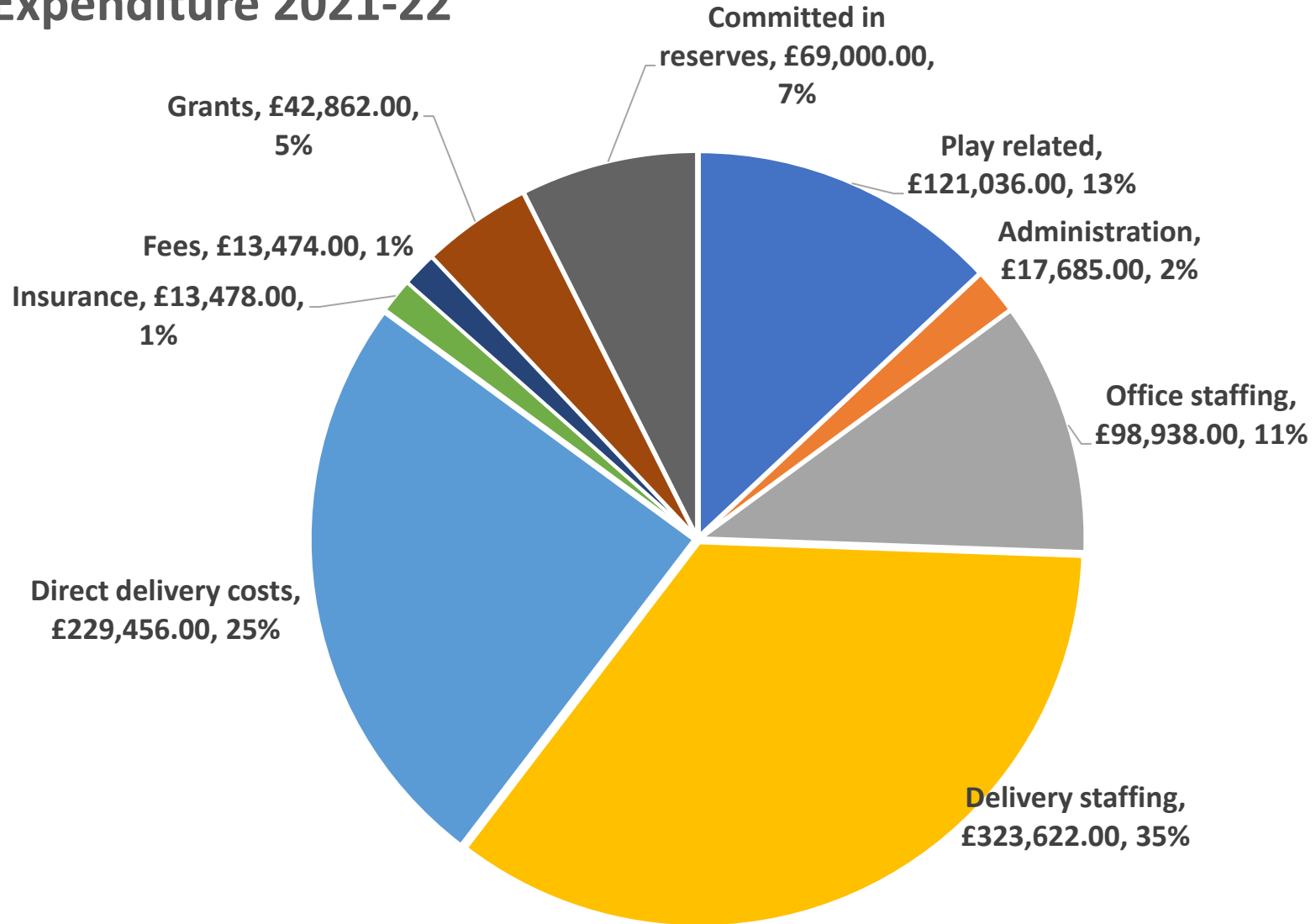
- Resident asked if the Parish Council was doing enough to create income for itself. The Parish Manager advised that there was group of Councillors reviewing options to expand income generation.
- Resident suggested that the Parish Council could promote more awareness of the financial impacts from anti social behaviour such flytipping/graffiti.
- Resident asked for an update on traffic calming proposals in West Swindon. Cllr Keith Williams advised that Swinley Drive was receiving ongoing feedback, mixed views had been received for Old Shaw Lane and there was some support so far for Grandison Close. Deadline is 24 June 2022 for further submissions. Officers will then assess for suitability and viability. If potential to process speed tube monitoring would take place.
- Cllr Gould suggested that a vehicle weight limit should be imposed for Whitehill Way to Meads Roundabout which would improve the ongoing damage to the road surface. Also asked that action be taking to reduce vehicle weight limit for roadside parking on the Rivermead estate. Noted by Cllr Williams.

Meeting Closed 6.45 pm.

Appendix A



Expenditure 2021-22



West Swindon Annual Parish Meeting 25.04.22

2020-21		2021-22
%		%
20	Play related	13
3	Administration	2
11	Office staffing	11
36	Delivery staffing	35
25	Direct delivery costs	25
2	Insurance	1
2	Fees	1
2	Grants	5
0	Committed in reserves	7
£875,676	Total	£929,551