



Flitwick Town Council

Financial Statement Year End 2024-2025

(Not Subject to Audit)

*Flitwick Town Council
The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1AH
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Council Information

Council Members for the Financial Year 2024-2025

Town Mayor – Cllr John Roberts

Deputy Town Mayor – Cllr Martin Platt

Other Members:

Cllr Andy Snape – Leader

Cllr Ian Blazeby – Deputy Leader

Cllr Clare Thompson

Cllr Tim Parsons

Cllr Howard Hodges

Cllr Andy Crawford

Cllr Dan Toinko

Cllr Fraser Patterson

Cllr Lorraine Bandy

Cllr Patricia Earles

Cllr Robert Wilsmore

Cllr Toby Harald

Town Clerk & Chief Executive – Stacie Lockey

Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) – Stephanie Stanley

Auditors – Mazars LLP (Smaller Authorities External Audit Team)

Internal Auditors – Auditing Solutions Limited

1. Introduction

Flitwick Town Council (FTC) has maintained a stable financial position this year, as demonstrated by the clean audit reports published on the website. The operational accounting procedures have been meticulously followed, with budget holders carefully considering revenue budget spending throughout the year.

As per statutory requirements, the Financial Regulations and associated policies were reviewed within the financial year to ensure compliance with legislation and to reflect current ways of working.

At the beginning of the 2024-25 Civic year, the Council chose to move on from the Finance Scrutiny Working Group and instate a Standing Committee for Finance & General Purposes (GP). This has been beneficial as all Members elected to this Committee provide valuable feedback and input into the accounts, helping operations to run smoothly and efficiently. Following the adopted Scheme of Delegations, the Finance and GP Committee has streamlined the decision-making process and assisted with the financial management of major capital projects.

FTC is not an average Town Council. It prides itself on providing its community with various statutory and discretionary services, as well as operating a traded service from the Rufus Centre. New initiatives are established, business needs are considered, and current services are continually re-evaluated in response to community needs, while balancing these with day-to-day accounting requirements.

Due to this forward-thinking ethos and the fact that it provides more services than an average Town Council, FTC's financial operations are vast. This includes the necessary financial operations of the Town Council services and its traded services (the Rufus Centre and Rendezvous Café) while complying with governance and legal responsibilities.

Key Decisions

In addition to day-to-day accounting operations, cash flow has been a prime focus over the last 12 months, as this has been a big year for capital project investment. The stand-out project relates to the refurbishment of the former bank, located at 3 Station Road, in the town centre. Expenditure for this project spans over two financial years, with a significant proportion of 2024-25's spending being funded by grants (totalling £384,000) from the Community Ownership Fund, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and the building's dilapidations settlement. For 2024-25, the Council utilised minimal reserves to fund the project; however, the project itself generated extensive activity for both receipts and payments, resulting in a significant variance in income and expenditure for this year compared to the previous year. Full explanations about this have been provided to the External Auditors.

The Council has a robust plan for recouping the reserves that will be spent in the next financial year. The ongoing project for the sale of Steppingley Road land will enhance the Council's financial position once the capital receipt is received, and this is anticipated for Quarter 4 of 2025-26, albeit subject to change. The Council will remain cautious about capital expenditure for the upcoming year until the receipt is received.

Another key decision for 2024-25 was the revenue budget savings generated mid-year. This process saved £52,400 and assisted with financing the refurbishment of 3 Station Road. Operational service provision remained at a high standard regardless of these decisions.

Social Value

During the year, the Council committed to prioritising a social value assessment of its community activities. This aimed to ensure that the community calendar achieved the most social, environmental and economic value when Council funds were spent. Social value looks beyond price alone to the collective benefit of a community.

When assessing community activities, it became apparent that some long-standing events and activities were either being provided similarly by external providers that residents could access, or they had a low social value score. FTC is always keen to fill any service provision gaps where possible, offering its residents the best possible opportunities.

Social value is measured by the following:

- Inputs – resources of all kinds
- Activities – what FTC does
- Outputs – direct result of an activity
- Outcomes – longer-term change it wants to see in the community/area
- Expected impact – the value it holds

Over the past 12 months, the Council has begun mapping the impact of the budgeted funds for its activities. With the Council's investment of staff time, resources, and facilities for its activities, shown below, residents were able to access these provisions free of charge:

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Pumpkin Carving Drop-In Session
- Summer Programme Activities
- Cookery Courses
- Forget Me Not Group (A Group for people with memory loss or Dementia and their carers)

The opportunities were either not already offered locally or at an affordable cost (or free). For the activities above, investment was provided by private businesses through sponsorship or donations, and/or volunteers were on hand to support the activities.

External grant funding was secured to support specific activities, which significantly contributed to the social value.

For example, the Pumpkin Carving drop-in session held at the Hub attracted 275 attendees. From examining other local pumpkin carving opportunities available as part of the assessment, it was clear that the admission fees were approximately £8 per person. If the 275 people who attended the Council's session had participated in one of these external events, this would have cost the community £2,200. With the Council's free activity, people were given an alternative option locally that was inclusive in the current cost-of-living crisis.

Similarly, the Community Fridge initiative was assessed. This provision relies heavily on volunteers, and it has been established that if the Council paid for staff to cover this service, it would cost approximately £60k per year. The leverage also comes from local businesses donating food produce to provide much-needed provisions for residents in need and to reduce waste.

The Council's commitment to social value and assessment will continue into the next financial year.

Priorities for 2025-26

As we progress into 2025-26, financial priorities include:

- Maintaining a stable financial position whilst making the remaining substantial payments for the 3 Station Road refurbishment
- Replenishing the Council's General Reserves
- Financing new boilers for the Rufus Centre
- Proactively seeking grant funding
- Securing Section 106 funds for Flitwick
- The development of the Nature Park project
- Continuing with the Steppingley Road land sale
- The implementation of digital purchase orders
- Ensuring the new Corporate Strategy achieves best value

2. Council & RFO Responsibilities

The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Corporate Risk Register document the Council's responsibilities. These are reviewed annually, and any revised model versions published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) are reviewed when released to ensure the Council's documents adhere to any changes.

The Council is responsible for:

- Planning for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
- Appointing one of its Officers to be responsible for administering those affairs. At this Council, that Officer is Stephanie Stanley (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO), and Stacie Lockey (Town Clerk & Chief Executive) has been appointed Deputy RFO.
- Managing its financial affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguarding its assets.
- Approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
- Approving the Financial Statement (not subject to audit).

The RFO has a range of responsibilities, but for the Year End Accounts, they are responsible for:

- Preparing the Unaudited Financial Statement following Part 4 of the 'Governance & Accountability for Local Practitioners – A Practitioner's Guide (England),' so far as applies to this Council.
- Presenting a true and fair view of the Council's financial position at 31st March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year.
- Preparing the AGAR to reflect the Council's financial position and the associated income and expenditure.
- Facilitating a public consultation, known as a Notice of Public Rights, for 30 working days for members of the public to view the unaudited accounts from within the following timescale: 3rd June to 11th August.
- Keeping proper accounting records up to date.
- Taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

RFO Certificate

I certify that the Financial Statement fairly presents the Council's financial position as of 31st March 2025 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 2024-25.

SCStanley

Stephanie Stanley

RFO

17th June 2025

Income & Expenditure

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total
<u>FINANCE & General Purposes</u>				
Income	43,330	530,744	900	(529,844)
Expenditure	132,440	1,040,688	530,584	(510,104)
Net Income over Expenditure	(89,110)	(509,945)	(529,684)	(19,739)
plus Transfer from EMR	0	4,541	0	(4,541)
less Transfer to EMR	1,386	1,386	0	(1,386)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(90,496)	(506,789)	(529,684)	(22,895)

BUSINESS Impro & Develop Board

Income	80,387	870,189	860,300	(9,889)
Expenditure	82,500	830,069	760,661	(69,408)
Net Income over Expenditure	(2,113)	40,120	99,639	59,519
plus Transfer from EMR	12,497	40,000	0	(40,000)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	10,385	80,120	99,639	19,519

COMMUNITY Services

Income	5,505	174,251	46,210	(128,041)
Expenditure	43,880	655,384	591,732	(63,652)
Net Income over Expenditure	(38,375)	(481,133)	(545,522)	(64,389)
plus Transfer from EMR	280	7,875	0	(7,875)
less Transfer to EMR	30,071	54,909	0	(54,909)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(68,166)	(528,167)	(545,522)	(17,355)

PROJECTS & Precept Management

Income	9,783	1,189,498	1,031,242	(158,256)
Expenditure	24,950	121,950	55,675	(66,275)
Net Income over Expenditure	(15,167)	1,067,548	975,567	(91,981)
plus Transfer from EMR	24,950	121,950	0	(121,950)
less Transfer to EMR	0	139,215	0	(139,215)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	9,783	1,050,283	975,567	(74,716)

Grand Totals:- Income	139,006	2,764,681	1,938,652	(826,029)
Expenditure	283,770	2,648,091	1,938,652	(709,439)
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(144,764)</u>	<u>116,590</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(116,590)</u>
plus Transfer from EMR	37,727	174,366	0	(174,366)
less Transfer to EMR	31,457	195,510	0	(195,510)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(138,494)</u>	<u>95,446</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(95,446)</u>

Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Council must submit its Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2024-25 to the External Auditor by 30th June 2025. The accounts contained in this return present fairly the Council's financial position, are consistent with the underlying financial records, and have been prepared based on Income and Expenditure.

The Annual Return Summary for 2024-25 is shown below:

		<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>General Notes for Guidance</u>
1	Balances brought forward	1,045,268	1,195,839	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of the previous year.
2	(+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,001,205	1,031,242	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3	(+) Total other receipts	1,091,625	1,733,439	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4	(-) Staff costs	929,651	1,044,794	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5	(-) Loan interest/capital repayments	76,647	55,911	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6	(-) All other payments	935,961	1,547,386	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7	(=) Balances carried forward	1,195,839	1,312,429	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. [Must equal (1+2+3)-(4+5+6)]
8	Total value of cash and short term investments	1,205,617	1,229,740	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9	Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	7,127,652	7,289,466	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10	Total borrowings	810,787	773,365	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

Balance Sheet

31st March 2024

31st March 2025

	Current Assets	
35,906	DEBTORS	92,680
447	Burial Grounds & Cemeteries	5,599
0	VAT Control Account	19,462
39,477	PREPAYMENTS	28,835
5,345	Mthly Business Prepays	8,166
47,844	PrePayment for Land Sale	53,989
4,733	Accrued Income	4,532
3,886	Stock Held - Bar	3,298
4,953	Stock Held - Food	4,346
5,018	Current Bank Ac Barclays 009	5,569
136,295	Barclays Business Reserve 106	42,231
1,000	PDQ Account	1,000
41,209	Tenants Deposits Account	46,550
400	Petty Cash Control (YE)	400
400	Float - Main Safe (YE)	400
400	Float - Cafe Safe (YE)	400
15	Float - Reception Safe (YE)	15
80	Float - Cafe Till Drawer	80
1,020,800	CCLA Deposit Fund	1,133,095
1,348,208		1,450,647
1,348,208	Total Assets	1,450,647
	Current Liabilities	
8,693	DEBTORS Control: Functions	15,997
1,902	VAT Control Account	0
23,904	CREDITORS	3,441
8,493	ACCRUAL - Loan Interest (YE)	7,943
18,438	ACCRUALS (YE)	12,119
18,645	PAYE/NIC Due	17,763

31st March 2024

31st March 2025

11,886	LGPS Pension Control	10,568	
2,619	NEST Pension Control	3,128	
2,973	Income in Advance (YE)	6,400	
5,009	Past Yr TM Charity (YE)	4,722	
1,591	Past Yr TM Allow & Civic Recep	2,291	
0	Past Yr Leader Expenses (YE)	77	
45,751	Tenants Rent Deposits	52,188	
1,500	Refundable Deposits: Functions	500	
963	Barclaycard Year End balance	1,079	
<u>152,369</u>		<u>138,217</u>	
1,195,839	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	1,312,429	
	Long Term Liabilities		
<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	
1,195,839	Total Assets Less Long Term Liabilities	1,312,429	
	Represented By		
453,445	GENERAL RESERVE	397,766	
742,394	Earmarked Reserves	914,664	
<u>1,195,839</u>		<u>1,312,429</u>	

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2025 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Signed Chairman

JRoberts

Date 17.6.25

Signed Responsible Finance Officer

SCStanley

Date 17.6.25

Supplementary Information for Year End

The following sections have been compiled as supplementary information to be viewed alongside the Council's AGAR submission. The FTC aims to provide residents with clear financial information for transparency and openness.

i) Budgets & Actuals Compared

		25/26 Budget	24/25 Actual	Variance +/-
Finance & General Purposes	Income	900	530,744	529,844
	Expenditure	530,584	1,040,688	-510,104
	<i>EMR Transfer</i>		-3,155	
	+/-	-529,684	-506,789	-22,895
Business Improvement & Development	Income	860,300	870,189	9,889
	Expenditure	760,661	830,069	-69,408
	<i>EMR Transfer</i>		-40,000	
	+/-	99,639	80,120	19,519
Community Services	Income	46,210	174,251	128,041
	Expenditure	591,732	655,384	-63,652
	<i>EMR Transfer</i>		47,034	
	+/-	-545,522	-528,167	-17,355
Flitwick Town Council	Income	1,938,652	2,764,681	826,029
	Expenditure	1,938,652	2,648,091	-709,439
	<i>EMR Transfer</i>		21,144	
	+/-	0	95,446	24/25 FTC Surplus

ii) Surplus/Deficit 2023-24

The Council is pleased to announce that its surplus for 2024-25 is £95,446. The Rufus Centre's traded service is the driving force behind this surplus. Members have decided to earmark most of the surplus achieved to assist with financing the remaining expenditure relating to the 3 Station Road refurbishment. A small proportion of the surplus has been earmarked for fixed wire testing works at the Rufus Centre, which is a requirement every five years.

The Rufus Centre made a profit of £80,117, but the Rendezvous Café made a loss of £20,603. Whilst the café has struggled to remain profitable consistently, a plan has been developed to address the situation, and it is pleasing to see that some of the immediate actions have already had a positive impact. The Council aspires for the café to at least break even for the ensuing financial year.

Last year, the Council earmarked some surplus funds for capital upgrades to the Rufus Centre; however, due to the commitment to complete the 3 Station Road refurbishment, this year, Members have no option but to reassess this approach. For 2025-26, none of the surplus from 2024-25 will be earmarked for Rufus Centre capital works. Other than the completion of the 3 Station Road refurbishment and urgent projects, capital expenditure will be kept to a minimum until the capital receipt for the Steppingley Road land sale is received. Operationally, the revenue budget for service provision is protected and funded by the precept.

The Precept received from Central Bedfordshire Council for the year ended 2024-25 was £1,031,242.

iii) Flitwick Town Council Employees

The Council employed 28 employees during 2024-25 (11 part-time). All staff were paid according to the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services pay scales.

Due to the business team (Rufus Centre/Rendezvous) needing assistance with hospitality for private functions and to cover annual leave/busy periods in the Rendezvous Café, several casual staff are included in FTC's monthly payroll.

iv) Pension Costs

The pension contributions paid by FTC during 2023-24 amounted to £138,630. The Council operates two pension streams for its employees:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
- NEST Pension Scheme

Casual staff are not entitled to pension benefits with FTC.

v) Town Mayor's Charity Fundraising & Allowance

Town Mayor's Charity Fundraising

Throughout the Civic Year, from May 2024 to May 2025, the Town Mayor fundraised for his chosen charities (Keech Hospice & The Town Mayor's Charity CIO). The amount raised was £6,705.14, which has been split evenly between the charities.

During 2023-24, the Council created a separate charity for the Town Mayor's fundraising, complete with a constitution of Trustees (the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairman of the Community Services Committee, and Ex-officio Trustee—the Town Clerk). This decision allows for crowdfunding, gift aid benefits for corporate

responsibility requirements for business support and additional access to grants, which positively impacts any Town Mayor's charities selected going forward. The Town Mayor's Charity also fundraises for other community initiatives and projects.

FTC will continue to support the Town Mayor's Charity and provide general administrative assistance required. FTC has agreed to support the charity with its bank charges.

Town Mayor's Allowance

The Town Mayor's Allowance is a budget set by the Council annually. A policy is adopted (and subsequently reviewed) that details the expenditure that can be coded to this budget throughout the year. It covers expenses such as mileage costs and ticket entry to civic engagements as the Town Mayor represents the Council as part of their role. The Town Mayor is required to provide receipts for any claim, as available. The Town Mayor's Allowance budget (including the Civic Reception event) for 2024-25 was set at £4,000. Since there was £1,988.88 unspent during the year, the Council chose to top up the charity fundraising by this amount at the Annual Statutory Meeting.

vi) General Power of Competence (GPC)

The GPC gives Councils the freedom to act when there is no specific power. Under the Localism Act 2011, under the GPC, 'a local authority has the power to do anything that individuals generally may do.' The criteria for any Council to adopt the GPC is:

- To have a CiLCA Qualified Clerk
- Two-thirds of Members need to have stood for election

For FTC and the purpose of the year ended 2024-25, there were two qualified Clerks (Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk), and the Council satisfied the criteria of having two-thirds of its Members elected to the Office of Councillor.

The Council's decision to adopt the GPC was accurately recorded at the first meeting of FTC following the elections in May 2022.

vii) Asset Register

FTC is required to have an Asset Register, which the Internal Auditor asks for as part of the Year End process. The Council's Asset Register accurately reflects fixed assets owned in the following categories:

- Land & Buildings
- Vehicles, Plant & Machinery
- Catering Equipment
- Equipment & Tools

- Furniture & Office Equipment
- Playground & Community Assets
- Civic Regalia
- Figures relating to investment and loans are listed separately

For 2024-25, FTC started utilising a separate feature of the accounting software to digitalise the Asset Register. As capital purchases were made throughout the year, these were added to the system and show an increased Asset Value of £7,289,466 (£161,814 increase from the previous year). The main purchases for the year, which contributed to the increased value, related to:

- £74,500 Skatepark Extension
- £15,800 Upgrades, modernisation and equipment purchases for the Rufus Centre
- £8,100 Nature Park Development
- £7,500 CCTV Upgrade for the Rufus Centre

The Digital Asset Register also has the function to replace or remove assets from the record and feeds this information through to the Annual Return, rather than manually inserting this figure at year-end.

viii) Debtors

Debtors include all organisations, suppliers, customers, etc., who owe the Council money as of 31st March 2025. Debtors at year-end can be explained as follows:

	31.03.24	31.03.25
Debtors (including for functions & burial ground)*	£27,660	£82,282
VAT	-	£19,462
Accrued CCLA Interest	£4,733	£4,532
Stock held (Food & Drink)	£8,839	£7,644
Prepayments (including land sale project)	£92,666	£90,990
Total	£133,898	£204,910

*When initially looking at the differences from debt at 2023-24 compared to the end of 2024-25, there seems to be a significant uplift in debtors. However, this amount reduces to £65,193 during April 2025. £62,000 of this relates to grant payments due for the skatepark extension and the music park at Hinksley Road. Both 'debts' will clear in the first part of the next financial year. The money due for private functions also inflates the figure, but the Council will not receive the balance for these until the event takes place.

At year-end 2024-25, the Council was owed VAT, whereas at the end of the previous year, this was not the case.

The Council operates a robust Debt Management Policy, and Officers hold regular credit control meetings.

ix) Investments & Loans

Public Sector Deposit Fund

The Council opened an investment bank account with Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) in 2021.

Since the Council qualifies as a 'Super Council' as its Precept exceeds £1m and has significant self-generated income from its traded service of the Rufus Centre, it is prudent to have a CCLA account. Through this Public Sector Deposit Fund, the Council benefits from competitive interest rates, and the funds are easily accessible, with withdrawals appearing in the Council's bank account within 24 hours.

CCLA investments qualify as Revenue Investments, and deposits/withdrawals do not fall within the classification of Income and Expenditure on the Annual Return. The end-of-year balance is included in the Bank & Cash Balances (as a Short-Term Investment) in the Annual Return. This year's figure is £1,133,095, which is £112,295 more than the closing balance at the end of 2023-24.

Loans

For the year ended 2023-24, the Council had two loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) for the following purchases:

- Manor Park
- 3 Station Road purchase

During the year, the loan balance for the purchase of the Rufus Centre was repaid by July 2024.

The outstanding balances for the loans are listed below:

- Manor Park £48,000 (final payment July 2029)
- 3 Station Road purchase £725,365 (final payment April 2047)

x) Creditors & Receipts in Advance

	2023-24	2024-25
Creditors		
VAT	£1,902	£-
Creditors Control	£23,904	£3,441
Accrued Loan Interest	£8,493	£7,943
General Accruals	£18,438	£12,119
PAYE/NIC	£18,645	£17,763
Pensions	£14,505	£13,696
Rent Deposits	£45,751	£52,188
Refundable Deposits	£1,500	£500
Barclaycard YE Balance	£963	£1,079
Receipts in Advance		
Income in advance	£2,973	£6,400
Town Mayor Charity, Town Mayor Allowance & Leader Budget YE Balance	£6,600	£7,090
Total	£143,674	£122,219

xi) Spreading the Cost

The Council needs to spread the cost of its traded service annual expenditure items, including business rates, utility costs, and a selection of annual contract costs (for example, security alarm system, CCTV contract, and kitchen/bar equipment maintenance contract).

Typically, local Town and Parish Councils would not ‘spread the cost’ of this type of expenditure as there is usually no traded service to Council operations, particularly not on the scale of the Rufus Centre. For these Councils, it is immaterial when this expenditure leaves the bank account. However, for FTC and their need to understand the traded service performance of the Rufus Centre and the Rendezvous Café month by month, these annual fees must be spread over 12 months.

For 2024-25, FTC’s accruals have been reduced due to spreading the costs further since the previous financial year.

xii) Earmarked Reserves

Separate from the General Reserves, the Council has Earmarked Reserves (EMRs), which can be attributed to different projects and initiatives. It also includes separate reserve funds for the statutory service of allotments, as it is a legal requirement for any income received for allotments to be re-invested within the service.

EMRs are set aside for a specific purpose, as approved by the Council, at any given time.

Below is a list of EMRs as of 31st March 2025:

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
313 Proud AF Picnic	0.00	100.00	100.00
314 EMR Compensation Field 2025	0.00	14,000.00	14,000.00
315 Central Project Fund	106,432.40	-14,268.39	92,164.01
316 EMR Election Costs	3,703.95	-3,703.95	0.00
317 EMR Nature Park Annual Grant	0.00	10,458.08	10,458.08
319 EMR Do Not Spend Ops Reserves	500,000.00		500,000.00
320 EMR IT Equipment Provision	6,457.00	-4,541.48	1,915.52
321 EMR Flitwick Living History	0.00	17,486.56	17,486.56
323 EMR Hinksley Music Park 24/25	0.00	10,504.50	10,504.50
324 EMR Allotments	25,088.22	-6,901.54	18,186.68
325 EMR Summer Programme	0.00	1,048.40	1,048.40
327 EMR Youth Activities	0.00	397.13	397.13
330 EMR Cost of Living	13,159.60	191.20	13,350.80
331 EMR Steppingley Rd Legal Fees	57,050.00		57,050.00
332 EMR 3 Station Road Development	0.00	133,565.82	133,565.82
335 EMR Community Events	3,000.00	-3,000.00	0.00
350 Capital Receipts Reserve	14,600.00	-14,600.00	0.00
800 PROJ - Nature Park	1,687.00	-1,687.00	0.00
801 PROJ - Flitwick Town Sq Defib	722.00		722.00
802 PROJ - Heritage Website	3,800.00		3,800.00
803 PROJ - Rural Match Fund Bench	2,000.00		2,000.00
804 PROJ - Lockyer Suite Works	524.00	-524.00	0.00
805 PROJ - Hub Car Pk Delineation	800.00	-800.00	0.00
806 PROJ - Office Room 28 Refurb	3,370.00	-3,370.00	0.00
808 PROJ - Nature Park Planning	0.00	1,814.37	1,814.37
814 PROJ - Skate Park Extension	0.00	36,100.00	36,100.00
	742,394.17	172,269.70	914,663.87

Introduced during 2023-24, as part of the Council's General Reserves Policy, an EMR that amounts to 50% of the annual Precept from Central Beds Council (£500,000) has been created. This ensures that six months of net expenditure is ringfenced for contingency funds. As we approach 2025-26, the Council will utilise some of this funding for urgent capital projects, approving spending on a case-by-case basis.

EMR movements at year-end included protecting grant funding for specific projects, for example, 'Flitwick: A Living History', Summer Programme activities and the Music Park at Hinksley Road.

xiii) Central Projects Fund (CPF)

Throughout the year, proposals can be submitted to the Council for consideration for new projects. The Scheme of Delegations states that the Full Council must approve project expenditure, not individual Committees. Projects can be for any area of Council operations, including Community Services and the Business Improvement & Development Board.

For some projects, grant funding will likely be secured to assist with or entirely finance the capital projects. For this financial year, grants have been secured from various funding sources, including Central Beds Council (Section 106, Planning Obligation Green Infrastructure Fund, Youth Provision), Lottery Funding and Hubbub. These grants have assisted with Council projects, including the Community Fridge initiative and the Nature Park.

The accounting process for agreed Council projects changed during 2023-24. Projects and their approved budgets were accounted for within the revenue budget as expenditure codes. During the year-end process for 2023-24, the Council was advised to account for projects within its EMRs, and this has been pursued for 2024-25 as well. This simplifies the accounting processes, allowing projects to span over two or more financial years.

For 2024-25, the CPF opening balance was £106,432, with an additional £55,675 contribution from the Precept.

The closing balance was £92,164.

The following projects were completed using the CPF during 2024-25:

- Lockyer Suite Modernisation/Upgrades
- The Hub Car Park Delineation
- Office Space Room 28 Refurbishment
- Replacement Windows for Rufus Centre Flat
- Burial Ground Wall
- Stocksfield Room Refurbishment facilitating Community Fridge Space
- IT Station in Rendezvous Café
- Replacement Dishwasher for Rendezvous Café
- Signage for Road Closures
- Rufus Centre CCTV Upgrade

The following projects will continue into the next financial year:

- Nature Park
- Skatepark Extension
- Heritage Website (linked to Flitwick: A Living History project)

This shows that the Council has continued to commit significant investment to improving the town's facilities and upgrading the Rufus Centre and its on-site Rendezvous Café.

xiv) Grant Aid - Benefits in Kind

Local Organisations

The Council is committed to supporting local not-for-profit organisations and charities. It supports several local organisations by providing Council land for their buildings and having a peppercorn rent agreement for these sites (ground leases).

Subsidised ground rent for local organisations is listed below:

Flitwick Girl Guiding - £1,750 per annum

Flitwick Scout Group - £3,500 per annum (original valuation doubled as an estimated new value since the site has been extended)

Flitwick & Ampthill Sea Cadets - £2,500 per annum

Flitwick & District Royal British Legion - £1,000 per annum

Flitwick Gardeners' Association shares a building with the Council's Tractor Store and, like the above organisations, has a lease agreement to occupy the space on Council land for their group.

The Rufus Centre

As a Community Hub, the Rufus Centre offers free space for charity organisations or not-for-profit groups to meet. The Stocksfield Room is the Council's designated room for this purpose, and for the year ended 2024-25, it has accommodated 426 bookings. These bookings were made up of 25 different organisations, and based on the commercial hourly rate for this room (£35.62), the Council provided a benefit-in-kind valued at £27,178 in the 2024-25 financial year.

The Council has continued with the license for SHARE: Flitwick & Ampthill to occupy space in the building and a container on site. This well-used community initiative acts as a 'Library of Things', offering the option to borrow items rather than buy something new.