

Explanation of Differences Between 2014/15 and 2015/16

RECEIPTS

1) Discount Grant

These sums are at the discretion of the government and our overseeing Borough Council.

2) Portland Fair

Last year's figure comprised payment for two autumn fairs, this year's for one autumn fair and a goodwill donation in respect of a spring fair, which the promoters decided not to hold this year.

3) Hire of Hall Refund

We have started hiring community halls on the Island after the Council decided it could no longer hold public meetings in the Council Chamber because of its lack of disability access. The Borough Council agreed to refund our hiring costs since they own our Council Offices and accept responsibility for the lack of the necessary facilities.

4) VAT

There were reimbursements from HMRC for two financial years in 2015/16.

PAYMENTS

1) Salaries

Council this year accepted the recommendations of a staffing review to increase staff hours and salaries and reappoint a third member of staff.

2) Advertising

With fewer special events this last year there has been less need to give notice.

3) Audit

The internal auditor spent more time than might be expected for a comparable authority, because (1) not all the source documents for the audit were available when necessary and (2) the auditor was asked to attend a Council meeting to explain certain aspects of her report.

4) Civic Expenditure

The 2014/15 figure includes invoices for the hire of halls, whereas in 2015/16 they were allocated to a separate budget heading. Otherwise expenditure was relatively the same over the two years.

5) IT Support

Some of the higher costs in 2014/15 was related to the acquisition of a new computer.

6) Council Offices

The Council has been forced to move premises and will incur much higher costs in the future. Since the Borough owned and paid for our old offices this did not need budget provision previously.

7) Elections

Spending under this heading fluctuates wildly from year to year depending on the number of elections held. Because 2015/16 was an election year for this council actual costs were over £8,000, but the Borough agreed to accept split payments across two years, this one and 2016/17.

8) Furniture & Equipment

The increase in 2015/16 is due to higher photocopying charges, greater use of the photocopier than in 2014/15 and a PAT testing exercise on all our equipment.

9) Hire of Halls

See Receipts (3) and (4) Civic Expenditure.

10) Legal Fees

This has been unexpected and unbudgeted expenditure this year in having to deal with a dispute raised by an outside source.

11) Postage

The two primary reasons for higher expenditure in 2015/16 appear to be less delivery of members' post by hand and a greater number of mayoral invitations to commemorative events.

12) Training / Conferences

Costs have risen through new councillors being elected in May 2015 and there being a greater willingness to undergo member training.

13) Cheyne Weares

Council decided to undertake significant landscape works on site, which had not been previously done.

14) Grants

Delays in procedure occurred to the 2014/15 batch that caused them to be made in 2015/16 as well as those normally given out.

15) Maintenance / Caretaker

An "Island Caretaker" was not appointed when the previous postholder left.

16) Neighbourhood Plan

This is a fluctuating expenditure item. Nearly £3,500 more was spent on work by consultants in 2014/15.

17) Projects

This is expenditure due to one-off items bearing no relation to each other. 2014/15, for example, included the cost of the staffing review.

18) Website

The main annual maintenance charge is made around the end of March and beginning of April. 2015/16 included two such charges.

19) VAT

Two significant charges arose in 2015/16 attracting VAT, one for a replacement mayoral badge, the other for the work at Cheyne Weares.