**Clerk’s Report to the Annual Parish Meeting**

5th May 2022

Firstly, thank you to the Council for their warm welcome. It is a pleasure to work with such a dedicated bunch of people who really just want to do the best for their community.

For those of you who don’t know me, I have lived in CM for 13 years but have children here at Ubley school, so am not involved in any village ‘politics’ but do have enough of an interest to care about your village!

It’s been a steep learning curve since taking over from the locum clerk in December but the Cllrs have been very patient with me, and Phil especially has been incredibly helpful in sharing his experience with me and I seem to be getting to grips with everything now!

I was lucky to join the council just as they dragged themselves into the 21st Century. In my first couple of months, we got our shiny new website and emails up and running and finally got internet banking, so we can now communicate more easily with most of our community and pay bills without having to write and post cheques after each monthly meeting.

From a financial perspective, we are in good shape with a year of reserves in the bank after underspending the last couple of years as a result of the pandemic and particularly due to the hard work of volunteer groundskeeping from Cllrs and residents.

This means that we can think about investing some of those reserves back in to the community and making some longer term improvement plans so the Council will discuss this over coming months.

I have copies of the budget for last and this year available if anyone would like one.

Significant spending plans that were unforeseen and not included in the budget for the coming year include taking over ownership and associated insurance costs of the wonderful new play area (which will be reported on separately) and we are in discussion with Curo for the Parish to take ownership of the green space there, which would incur some maintenance costs even with a volunteer workforce, but would protect the land from future development. We have been delighted with the enthusiasm of residents to take this on and will keep everyone informed of any progress with Curo. These costs are certainly not prohibitive given our current reserves!