

Main issues covered: Town Council budget for 2015/16; Media release on 2015/16 precept; Payment schedule for December 2014.

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 7.00PM ON MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2015 AT THE CIVIC HALL, POYNTON

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr C Gorst

Cllrs. G Bartos, M Beanland, L A Clarke, H Murray, B Lewis, A Smith and G Smith

Also attending under SO 56: Cllrs Mrs S Horsman and R E West

39. Apologies for absence

Cllr Mrs J Saunders

40. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interests

None.

41. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th December 2014

Cllr Clarke requested an analysis of the expenditure on IT/software as resolved at the previous meeting. The Clerk said this will be included in the next Committee meeting agenda.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 15th December 2014 are approved as an accurate record (6 - 2 abs)

42. Town Council's 2015/16 budget

The Clerk highlighted the key areas from his written report concerning the Town Council's budget for 2015/16.

The Chairman explained that because of the increased costs being passed down from CE to the Town Council the budget process is being started much earlier than before.

The Chairman asked if we had a total figure that the various items would add up to. In reply the Clerk said he did not, as there are some imponderables.

He simply wanted to highlight certain issues that need to be noted and/or anticipated with regard to the 2015/16 budget.

The Chairman asked, based on these figures, whether we might be looking at a much higher precept in 2016/17. The Clerk said that if we are able to reduce the amount in the precept that is earmarked for our reserves, we may be able to keep the precept at the same level as for 2015/16, plus inflation, but it is really too early to say.

Cllr Clarke noted incoming changes for small businesses regarding higher NI contributions which would affect the Town Council. The Clerk explained that this would be taken into account when budget setting.

Cllr Lewis noted a current government scheme to fund new boilers and insulation and requested the Clerk to explore if the Town Council could benefit from this. Cllr G Smith said that this was for domestic purposes, if the boiler is over 10 years old – there are geographical limits too.

RESOLVED: That the report is received and that each Committee starts to review its budgets for 2015/16 and beyond (NC)

43. 2015/16 Precept Media Release

Members agreed that it should be made clear in the release that there is no provision in the budget for salaries, any form of allowance or other payments to Councillors for attending meetings or for any other duty. Nor do they claim expenses, and give their services free of charge for the benefit of the community (apart from the Mayor's official expenses).

Members also agreed that it should be made clear that the 2.2% national pay award for staff was a three year settlement for 2014 -16.

RESOLVED: That the draft release is received and, with the amendments as suggested, approved in principle (NC)

44. Draft Remit for the F&GP committee

RESOLVED: That the draft remit for the F&GP committee is received (NC)

45. Payment Schedule for December 2014

Members raised the following points/challenges, with the Clerk's responses:

- The Neighbourhood Plan is covered by a central government grant of £7,000.

- The Town Council had received a WREN grant for £35,000 for re-equipping Brecon Park, with the condition that the Town Council pay the VAT on the equipment.
- There was more than one invoice for the 2014 Christmas lights—meanwhile the Operations Manager was seeking estimates for a more reliable and improved display for this year.
- The cost of £172 for 1,000 business cards from Tunncliffe seemed high (this sum included VAT, which is refunded) and cheaper suppliers would be sought.
- Membership fees for the Coppice Road Allotment Association had been collected with 2014/15 rent demands, and these had been reimbursed to the Association by Town Council cheque.

RESOLVED: That the Payment Schedule for December 2014 is received (NC)

The meeting concluded at 7.20pm