

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD AT 8.15PM ON MONDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2016 AT THE  
CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr C Gorst

Cllrs: M Beanland, L A Clarke, Mrs R Horsman-Johnson, G King, H Murray, L Podmore, Mrs J Saunders and G Smith

Attending under SO56: Cllr Mrs S Horsman

31. Questions from members of the public

None.

32. Apologies for absence

Cllr Mrs T Lorde.

33. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary or other interests

None.

34. Previous meeting minutes

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016 are approved as an accurate record (6 for, 3 abstentions)**

35. Consider the quotes and information relating to challenging the non-domestic business rates 2015 onwards

The Deputy Clerk, Haf, confirmed that two quotes have been received. She explained that all properties have been re-rated from September 2016 and this will take effect from 2017 and outlined the implications of this for the two quotes received.

Members considered the two quotes and it was proposed that Montague Evans, subject to a check that no further charges will be applied/incurred and that they provide suitable references, are approved.

**RESOLVED: That the quotes and information relating to challenging the non-domestic business rates 2015 onwards is received. That Montague Evans, subject to a check that no further charges will be applied/incurred and that they provide suitable references, are approved (NC)**

36. Review the provisional Town Council budget for 2017/18

Members received the documentation to review the provisional Town Council budget for 2017/18. This included the budget completed by the accountant, the summary budget, the detailed breakdown document and the balance sheet. The Deputy Clerk spoke on the detailed breakdown and noted the points of significant variance from previous years.

Members noted the changes which are in part due to the recoding of staffing posts, the impact of increased business rates, increased pension contributions, provision of play park locking and un-locking and the withdrawal of the precept support grant. The Deputy Clerk noted the areas identified for potential savings, these include computing costs, stationery, catering, civic functions, gas, electricity and general maintenance.

From discussion the following points were also noted:

- The Clerk and Deputy Clerk will attempt to negotiate on the current photocopying contract in the next 12 months.
- The security contract for unlocking the parks was discussed. There is an increase in the budget as a result of taking over the locking and unlocking of the Glastonbury Play Area. A member advised that the Glastonbury Play Area Committee had informed him that they would take over the responsibility. However, as this might change in the future it might still be advisable to build some contingency into the budget.
- A new budget line is introduced to the FIED budget for community grants.

From the information received overall there is an 11% increase in the precept. From a thorough review of budget lines and precept members agreed that this increase is too steep. It was proposed that the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee review the areas of savings with a view to reducing the precept grant to within a 7% to 9% increase.

**RESOLVED: That the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes committee review the areas of savings with a view to reducing the precept grant to within a 7% to 9% increase (NC)**

37. Note the VAT return for July to September 2016

**RESOLVED: That the VAT return for July to September 2016 is noted (NC)**

38. To note the bank reconciliation for September 2016 as verified by the Chairman

**RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliation for September 2016 as verified by the Chairman is noted (NC)**

39. Payment Schedule for September 2016

**RESOLVED: That the Payment Schedule for September 2016 is received and approved (NC)**

40. Consider and agree communication messages arising from this meeting

None.

Meeting End Time: 9.20pm