

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT 8.00PM ON MONDAY 4TH JANUARY 2016 AT THE
CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr M Beanland

Cllrs: 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

41. Questions from members of the public

There were no members of the public in attendance.

42. Apologies for absence

Cllrs C Gorst and Mrs T Lorde.

43. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interests

None.

44. Previous meeting minutes

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2015 were approved subject to the following two amendments:

Item 7: Amend Resolution to read: **That Cllr Clarke assists the Clerk with drafting a letter to David Rutley MP to request a proportion of the business rates to be retained by town and parish councils.'**

Item 7: The Christmas lights are for street decorations, not for local businesses.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2015 are, subject to the amendments, approved as an accurate record (NC)

45. Receive and consider the written report from Will McKellar, Chief Officer, Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North

Mr Will McKellar attended the committee meeting to speak on his written report. He clarified that the statistics in the report are for a 15 month period rather than a 12 month period as stated in the report.

Mr McKellar noted the following:

- The service provided to Town Councils is an enhanced additional service providing accessibility, depth and expertise.
- The CAB volunteer service provision in towns such as Macclesfield provides only limited support.
- The service offers a marked and distinctive difference to the volunteer service.
- The service provides benefits in terms of locality, the breadth and depth of the service and the expertise is offered with a speedy resolution.
- It is a service that provides continuity and familiarity.
- Follow up work for the Town Council service is far wider.
- The CAB service provides help with a range of services including personal, financial, mental health, benefit and housing issues which can be complex areas.
- Areas such as Poynton, Wilmslow and Knutsford have similar issues.

At what point should access to the service be restricted based on locality?

As with other Town Councils the statistics can be monitored with a breakdown by postcode.

From earlier discussions it was noted that the statistics in the report state that 90% of clients are from the Poynton postcode and 10% from other postcodes. Mr McKellar explained that some of these may be people who work in Poynton and although they live out of the area they are able to access the service during their working day.

Would there be a benefit in running a campaign with the Rotary similar to the campaign run by the Lions in Wilmslow where some residents have chosen to surrender their fuel payment allowance as a donation to the CAB? These funds are to be redistributed through the CAB service to those suffering from fuel poverty.

The scheme run by the Lions has so far raised £4,000 over a six to eight week period.

Following discussion, it was proposed that in Poynton funds raised should not be distributed but instead used to fund the CAB service. This is because the CAB service is funded by the residents of Poynton and there is no longer funding available from other sources to support the CAB service. The Clerk will advertise this information in the PUN.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation from Mr McKellar are received with thanks. That the committee endorse the decision to continue to fund the CAB service (NC)

46. Receive and note an email dated 14th December 2015 from Cllr Peter Groves, CE Finance and Assets Portfolio Holder, concerning the 2016/17 Precept and Council Tax Support Grant

RESOLVED: That the email from Cllr Peter Groves, Finance and Assets CE Portfolio Holder is received (NC)

47. Receive and note a letter from Alex Thompson, CE Corporate Manager Strategy and Reporting, concerning the Approval of Taxbase 2016/17

RESOLVED: That the correspondence is received (NC)

48. Receive and consider a written brief from the Clerk on the Town Councils' budget for 2016/17, with a recommendation then to be made to the Town Council meeting on Monday 11th January 2016 with regard to the 2016/17 Precept

A member of the committee noted that this is an increase of nearly 50% in five years. CE are responsible for the increasing precept because the Town Council is having to fund more costs for items such as the air quality monitor and CCTV amongst many others. The member suggested that the Town Council should pursue the issue of double taxation and questioned why Macclesfield and Crewe do not have to pay for their CCTV provision while Poynton do. This applies to a whole range of other services too. The member noted that although the precept has to be increased to cover the cost for the services provided by the Town Council, the increasing cost of the precept is not the solution to the problem. Following further discussion, it was proposed that the Clerk write a letter to raise the burden of the increasing costs on the Town Council to David Rutley MP and copy the letter to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

RESOLVED: That the report from the Clerk is received. That the precept for 2016/17 is recommended to the Town Council on Monday 11th January 2016. That as proposed the Clerk write a letter to David Rutley MP and copy the letter to NALC (NC)

49. Note the Bank Reconciliation for September and November 2015, to be signed by the Chairman

The committee agreed that for this meeting the September and November 2015 Chairman's report is noted. It was proposed that in future the Bank Reconciliations (front sheet) are circulated with the agenda papers. Also that a quarterly budget actual variance report is provided for each committee.

RESOLVED: That the September and November 2015 Chairman's report is noted. That future Bank Reconciliations (front sheet) are circulated with the agenda papers. That a quarterly budget actual variance report is provided for each committee (NC)

50. Payment Schedule for November 2015

RESOLVED: That the Payment Schedule for November 2015 is deferred to the next meeting (NC)

Meeting End Time: 9.00pm