



Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee Held On Wednesday 6th January 2016 at 8.00pm in the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Tony Williamson (TW) - Chairman
Matt Reid (MR)
Ian Hill (IH)
Tom Bindoff (TB)
Roger Beattie (RB)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

01/16 Apologies for absence
There were none.

02/16 Chairman's Remarks
There were none.

03/16 To approve the Minutes from the Meeting on the 24th November 2015 which were received by Council on 8/12/2015
Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

04/16 Matters Arising
Signatories on Bank Accounts – It was noted that only 3 signatories are allowed on our accounts.

05/16 Declarations of Interest
There were none.

06/16 Budget and Precept 2016/2017

1. Budget 2016/2017

a. PSFC Budget

Paul Griffiths (Chair WTFC and PSFC Committee Member) had sent an email stating 'A note to confirm the football club does not agree to proposed increases in costs and will review the situation in the New Year. I propose the PSFC does what it can to attract new bookings, improve its income, rather shift costs onto sports. I understand, during the last PSFC meeting it was agreed to pay 'reasonable' tenant costs, ie. For electricity for machines, gas used for heating, our share of insurance etc. I would like to see what these proposals look like in the New Year'.

It was noted that the November 2015 PFSC meeting when the Budget was discussed, PG had sent his apologies and sent Steve Strong as his representative. Keith Woolfson (WTFC) was also present. They both agreed with the principles of the proposals.

TW said that it seems that the Chair of Watlington Football Club is stating that the Club considers that all the costs of the pavilion and sports field should be met by the Parish Council and from the lettings income and that it would not be reasonable for any such costs to be met by those who play football. He stated that he does not accept this principle and neither should the WPC. The committee thought that public funds should not pay for private sports. RB said that the Bowls and Tennis Clubs have to pay towards the building upkeep of the ones that they use.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: To accept the principle of:

1. That public money should not be used to support private sports/events etc.
2. That if a committee member is not present at a meeting where an issue is discussed and there are representatives present who have discussed and given their opinions that a member of that same organisations should not then be allowed to negate their representatives' comments.

However, before considering the actions that the Parish Council might take towards the Watlington Football Club and Watlington Cricket Club TW suggested that the Parish Council invite the Football Foundation, Oxfordshire FA, the Watlington Football Club and the Watlington Cricket Club to a meeting to exchange views on these principles

Resolved: That we arrange a meeting with the FF, OFA, WTFC and WCC to discuss this issue.

2. Precept and Budget 2016/2017

Following discussion on the budget the committee agreed on a Budget and Precept for 2016/2017 that they felt was appropriate to recommend to Full Council. It was noted that SODC will no longer be giving any Top Up Grants. The committee discussed the things that OCC and SODC are no longer willing to fund which are things that our community wish to retain. These include the WPC having to pay for Street Cleaning in the Town Centre which was previously paid for by SODC. A grant towards buses with OCC no longer subsidising them, a grant towards the Children's Centre that OCC previously used to fund. The Finance Committee have also put in £2000 which hopefully can be used to obtain grants for new play equipment in the paddock (which has come to the end of its life). The committee have also allowed £7,000 (£4000 for Admin Assistant wages, £1000 for incidentals and £2000 towards professional services/surveys and could be used for match funding for grants) for the Neighbourhood Plan for the next financial year.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

i) To increase the annual payment of Council Tax Band D from £78.19 to £92.70 and other bands proportionately

ii) To establish a precept (being the Band D figure multiplied by the Tax base of 1152.4) of £106,828.00. This equates to an increase of £1.40 for each month for the 10 months payable.

iii) To approve the attached Committee Budgets figures (titled Budget Recommendation for Full Council on 12th January 2016)

3. Neighbourhood Plan – Request from Steering Committee and NP Forum following the meeting held on Monday 4th January 2015 to commission a Housing Needs Survey ASAP.

This issue was discussed and a quote for £1530 from Community First (previously ORCC) had been received today. This price reflects that delivery/collection of questionnaire etc would be done by NP volunteers. TB said that there is great commitment from the Housing Advisory Group volunteers and that they would like to commission this survey now and the advice given has said that every community should have Housing Needs Survey done as part of the NP process. TW said that he felt that this should wait until we are able to get a grant from SODC towards this survey (SODC have said that the Grants should open in February 2016). WPC could agree to pay for this now (if not sufficient money left in the current budget it could be taken out of the £2000 put in for next year) but then would not have the opportunity to get some funding towards this. TB said that if we waited to do this it could have a very negative impact on the NP Volunteers as this could lower the current momentum that they have and will also affect the target dates now that the NP has been stepped up and has a hopeful date of February 2017 for the Referendum. TW stated that as the Finance Committee we have to use our public money in the best way for our community.

Actions to be done before FC on 12/1/2016

1. The Clerk to speak to SODC and find out the date that we can apply for grants for the NP and if the grant would need to match funded or not. To ask if we commission a survey before the grant if we would be allowed to put it on our application.

2. The Clerk to find out exactly how much is left in the current NP Budget to the end of this financial year.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: The Vote on this was 3 in favour, 2 against- CARRIED

That WPC support commissioning a Housing Needs Survey. This could be done in two ways if there is not sufficient money available in the current budget.

1. We fund the survey out of the £2000 allocated for professional advice/surveys in 2016/2017. This would then only leave £500 available to apply for any match funding grants.

2. That we commission the survey when we are awarded a grant from SODC which would allow us to use the £2000 allocated towards match funding grants.

That WPC support option 2.

07/16 Staff Issues

1. **Staff Reviews** – These have all been done and IH just needs to write these up.
2. **Review of Staffing Needs** – Agreed that this be discussed again in November 2016

08/16 Other Financial Issues

1. **Business Rates** – At the moment we are unable to get any reduction in our rates as we have 3 properties that we pay business rates on. There was a suggestion that we could look into having the Car Park as a Charity. It was agreed that this issue is not taken any further at this time.

2. **Accounting procedure of the pavilion bar.** - MR said that bar accounts for the last financial year are available and that he will send a copy to the Clerk. He said that the rules will need to be tightened up to reflect the HMRC changes which are being brought in from 1 April 2016.

09/16 General Issues

- a) **Police office in Community Office** – Letter sent no response received to date.
- b) **EcotecWorld** – The email from Tim Horton on this issue was noted. The Clerk has acknowledged this email. IH/MR and the Clerk will send a response to TH in due course.

10/16 Correspondence

None.

11/16 Items for Next Meeting.

Pensions – March 2016

Review of Staffing Needs- November 2016

12/16 Any Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.55PM

See attached Recommended Budget Figures on the next page.