



Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee Held On Wednesday 4th January 2017 at 8.00pm in the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Tony Williamson (TW) - Chairman
Matt Reid (MR)
Nicky Smallbone (NS)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Stephanie Van de Pette (SvP)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

In Attendance:

Terry Jackson, Tim Horton Watlington Hoard

01/17 Apologies for absence
Ian Hill

02/17 Chairman's Remarks
There were none.

03/17 To approve the Minutes from the Meeting on the 29th November 2016 which were received by Council on 11/10/2016
Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

04/17 Matters Arising
There were no matters arising

05/17 Declarations of Interest
There were no declarations of interest notified.

06/17 Budget and Precept 2017/2018 – Attached paper showing a 2nd Draft Budget and also a Precept Calculation table was attached to the Agenda

1. Watlington Hoard

At the Full Council December 2016 meeting it was agreed that TJ would give a request to this Finance Meeting. Tim Horton and Terry Jackson attended a meeting this morning and asked to update the Committee. This was agreed.

TJ stated that this is a very important issue for Watlington. If the Hoard is saved and if WPC would allocate £3000, this would purchase a small set of replica coins (Total Cost £3,500) which could be held on display e.g. in the Library and used for exhibits and lectures in Watlington and also used for further fundraising in the future.

The Ashmolean has to raise £1.35M to purchase this hoard and keep it in Oxfordshire. If it does not the hoard could be sold in lots and would be split up. As at this morning the shortfall remaining to raise is £107,000.

TJ said that they have in mind 2 strands of fundraising: to send individual letters to specific people and also to have a leaflet drop to all residents of Watlington.

They will be asking for a contribution from the Parish Council this month and to increase the sum hopefully from community contributions for the Watlington Hoard so that the Ashmolean Museum could keep this hoard in Oxfordshire and it would be hoped at some point having a set of replica coins in Watlington. TW thanked TJ and TH for all their work on this issue.

After discussion it was agreed

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the Parish Council support the Appeal to raise funds by the Ashmolean Museum to purchase the Watlington Hoard and keep it in Oxfordshire.

The Parish Council to also support the fundraising appeal by circulating, from the Ashmolean and the Parish Council, a joint letter to residents in our community.

That we allocate £500 from this year's budget or reserves, with the proviso that this is returned to the Parish Council if the total amount is not raised by the Ashmolean.

2. Precept and Budget Recommendation needed for Full Council on 10th January 2017.

There was much discussion on this and the extra items that the Parish Council are minded to take on following cuts by both OCC and SODC, eg street cleansing, extra grass cutting, funding towards the Children's Centre.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

i) To increase the annual payment of Council Tax Band D from £92.70 to £105.37 and other bands proportionately.

ii) To establish a precept (being the Band D figure multiplied by the Tax base of 1157.40) of £121,956.00. This equates to an increase of £1.27 for each month (Band D) for the 10 months payable.

iii) To approve the attached Committee Budgets figures (titled Budget Recommendation for Full Council on 10th January 2017)

07/17 Staff Issues

1. **Staff Reviews/Appraisals** – These have been carried out for all staff. It was noted that Christina Wiltshire wishes to retire by September 2017 but would be happy to cover in the holiday after this time if needed.

2. **Pensions** – TW had circulated a paper on this.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That Watlington Parish Council enrol with NEST (National Employment Savings Trust) and that Finance Committee manage the procedure needed for Auto – Enrolment.

3. **Review of Staffing Needs** – the Committee considered that the present post of 'Administrative Assistant' should be replaced by that of "Assistant Clerk", a recommendation for which will be brought to a future Council Meeting.

08/17 Other Financial Issues

1. **General Power of Competence** – A Briefing Paper was attached to the Agenda which explained that the Council could pass a resolution to adopt this power, if 2/3rds of the Council members have been declared elected and if the Clerk holds one of a number of specified qualifications.

At present 2/3rds of our Council has been elected. At this time the Clerk's qualifications do not include one of those specified; the Committee suggested that the Clerk do the course needed and she is willing to do this. The Clerk will look into the detail of this.

2. **Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit.**

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: To agree the following statement:

'The main role of the Internal Auditor is to check all the financial and accountable records that the Clerk must keep. This is done soon after the end of the financial year and involves all the financial transactions and both the legal authority and procedural authority for such transactions - eg the signed minutes of all meetings. Once the Internal Auditor is satisfied with the accounts and records, the Clerk prepares the relatively brief submission to the External Auditor. During the year the Clerk occasionally seeks his advice - eg in transferring the Receipt and Payment accounts, operated through the year, into Accrual accounts needed for audit. Were the Clerk to leave or become temporarily unavailable, the Internal Auditor would assist a new or acting clerk'.

3. **Financial Regulations Review**

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the attached draft Financial Regulations for 2016/2017 be agreed.

4. Office Decoration

Further to the request from the Operation Committee to find some money within this year's budget to get the main office decorated. Three quotes were given to the Committee.

The Finance Committee do not think they have sufficient information that this is a good use of Council's money and would ask the Operations Committee to reconsider

09/17 General Issues

There were no general issues raised.

10/17 Correspondence

There was no correspondence that needed discussion.

11/17 Items for Next Meetings

Pensions

Staffing Issues

12/17 Any Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED 9.55PM