

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance and Policy Committee** which was held on **Monday, 5th December 2016** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7.30 pm

PRESENT	Councillor A. Ross Councillor N. Barrett-Morton Councillor Mrs P. Dow Councillor N. Fogg Councillor A. Kirk Wilson Councillor G. Loosmore Councillor M. Hall	Chairman Town Mayor
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs S. Parker Mrs D. Whitehall Mrs S. Pryor Mr T. Millett Plus 1 member of the public	Town Clerk Administrator The Adviser Marlborough.News

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions

383/16

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Dobson and Allen

384/16

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Cllrs. Ross and Hall – agenda item 6 – Small Grant Scheme – non-pecuniary.

385/16

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman was pleased to announce that since the agenda for this meeting had been published, the External Audit for the year to 31st March 2016 had been received and there were no issues to draw to Members' attention.

On Friday, 9th December the Mayor would be visiting the Prospect Outreach Centre at Savernake Hospital for the presentation of the lifting cushion that this Committee approved for grant funding at the last meeting.

The Chairman read out a letter of thanks received from the Carole Walker at the Jubilee Centre for the grant awarded at the last meeting.

386/16

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held Monday, 19th September 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman

387/16

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The contents of the Town Clerk's report were noted.

*As Cllr. Ross had declared an interest, Cllr. Loosmore chaired the following item
Cllr. Fogg joined the meeting*

388/16

TOWN COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

Members considered three applications for grant funding. A fourth had been withdrawn. It was noted that the grants awarded used all the remaining budget (£1,644) of the Small Grants Scheme for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: (i) to award £844.00 to The Merchant's House Trust as a contribution to a scheme to install brown tourist signs

RESOLVED: (ii) to award £350.00 to The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust towards the provision of security equipment for vulnerable people in the locality

RESOLVED: (iii) to award £450.00 to Revitalise towards the provision of respite holidays to Marlborough residents

Cllrs. Ross and Hall did not vote

Cllr. Ross resumed the chair

389/16

COMMITTEE BUDGETS 2016/17

Members noted the committee income and expenditure reports to end October 2016 (Month 7) together with the list of payments. There were no questions.

390/16

INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT 2016/17

Members noted the first Interim Internal Audit for 2016/17 in which no issues had been identified. Members echoed the comment in the overall conclusion commending the Office Manager, Mrs Fry, on the manner and quality of her record keeping.

391/16

PRECEPT 2017/18

Members noted a report from the Town Clerk and considered proposed Committee budgets and how to handle future asset transfers and devolved services from Wiltshire Council.

In past years, the agreed budget and precept figures had been submitted from this Committee to Full Town Council for final review and decision in December. This year, there was some uncertainty as:

- (i) central government had not yet made a decision on whether to extend referendum principles to town and parish councils which could lead to capping the precept at 2%. (The Town Council had responded to a recent national consultation on this issue). This decision would not be made until January 2017, and

- (ii) a preliminary list of potential asset transfers and devolved services from Wiltshire Council had been received but revenue and capital costs were as yet unknown.

It was agreed that the following should be included in the 2017/18 budgets:

- **Property Committee** – An income line of £9,000 for the rental of 2 recently purchased properties (if agreed by Full Council at its meeting on 12th December) and an additional £7,000 for the budget line (4054) for letting agent fees for all corporate properties
- **Finance & Policy Committee** – An additional budget line of £9,000 towards by-election and referendum costs

Members noted that the Committee Budgets included the higher annual cost of managing the new toilets in George Lane and a public works loan together with rises in salaries, utility costs, insurance, legal fees, etc. took the precept increase rise to around 13%.

All budgets represented known commitments and did not include additional costs for Wiltshire Council's proposed 'bundle' of asset transfers and devolved services. The Town Council had already expressed an interest in the Corner House and the Youth Centre at St Margaret's Mead. Additional grass cutting was among devolved services. Very preliminary figures took these revenue costs to circa £65,000. Before a final figure could be agreed, it would be sensible for a Working Party to be established to discuss the possible asset transfers and services bearing in mind that if referendum principles were extended to town and parish councils then this was likely, within certain time limits, to fall outside of a capping regime.

RESOLVED: (i) to agree the proposed 2017/18 budgets for the Finance & Policy, Amenities & Open Spaces, Planning and Property Committees and recommend them to Full Town Council at an Extraordinary meeting in mid-January together with a net budget figure of £583,386 equating to a precept of £177.35 representing a 13.16% increase for a Band D property.

RESOLVED: (iii) that a Working Party is set up to look at the possibility of asset transfers and devolved services from Wiltshire Council. The Working Party would then make a recommendation to Full Town Council at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting in mid-January 2017 alongside the recommended 2017/18 budgets and precept figure which may or may not be increased depending on a decision on timing of taking on additional assets and services.

The member of the public left the meeting

392/16

LONE WORKING POLICY

RESOLVED: to recommend a policy on Lone Working to Full Town Council

393/16

CHANGES TO RATEABLE VALUES

Members noted correspondence from the Valuation Office Agency of HM Revenue & Customs

394/16

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPENSATION SCHEME

Members noted details about the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Signed Date