

COLWALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held in the Jean Simon Room at Colwall Village Hall on Wednesday 16th November 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Chairman – Councillor Rees and Councillors Beard, Butler, Haynes, Stock, Trafford-Roberts, one member of the public – J Mills, and the Clerk.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Carless and Kendrick.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Stock declared an interest in item 6(ii) (b) relating to the request for a donation from Colwall PCC

Councillor Rees declared an interest in item 6(ii) (c) relating to a request for a donation from the Malvern Hills AONB.

Both Councillors did not participate in the debate or vote relating to these respective items.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. 2016/17 Budget

The meeting was suspended to allow the member of the public to speak regarding the budget, the preparation thereof and the contents therein.

Copies of the draft budget had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The administrative budget and other administrative costs e.g. Insurance, Audit Fees etc are proposed by the Clerk and endorsed by the Chairman of the Finance & General Purpose Committee; these are based on expenditure in the current year and allow for inflationary rises and the expected one spinal point pay grade increase for the Clerk.

The assumption for the Pension payment is 24.5% of the Clerks gross salary, which is based on the LGPS employer's pension contribution as determined by the Fund Actuary based on the Fund Valuation.

The Village Amenities section of the budget is as proposed by that committee for acceptance.

Under the donation section - A request has been received from the Church for an increase in the Churchyard Maintenance donation. This has been at the current level for at least 10 years and it is expected that Council will approve an increase. This has been built into the proposed budget.

Turning to the income - Although the grant for the Lenghtsman Scheme will be greatly reduced in 2017/18 by 66.6% and the P3 Scheme by 15% it has been assumed

that Council the will wish to continue the activities at the current level and subsidise the shortfall, which are easily accommodated within the budget.

It is proposed that the library surcharge continues at its current level of £16,000 with any surplus remaining at year-end being transferred to the Library Reserve fund as before. Library costs are estimated to total £11,500 for the year. These are the costs arising from the staffing. It is almost certain that at some point Council will be expected to assume more of the running costs of the library and the reserve fund will cover such eventualities temporarily giving Council time to plan and rebudget. There have been no costs associated with the library building as Herefordshire Council continues to maintain and repair the building as per the terms of their lease. Eventually the building will revert to Colwall Parish Council at the end of the lease in 5 years, if not negotiated before. This will bring potentially considerable costs and liabilities. Councillors agreed with this approach.

In summary, allowing for all the above, this results in a proposed budget that runs to a small surplus of £818.

After the various likely additions and subtractions to and from the accumulated funds, the unallocated reserve will be increased by £766 from the likely starting figure of £48,384 to £49,150 by the end of the Budget Year.

In addition to the general reserves there are considerable reserves in specific Allocated Funds, some of which have been utilised, as they should be, during the current financial year to cover the costs of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. These Allocated Reserves are forecast to total approximately £52,955 by the end of the Budget year, 31 March 2018.

The meeting was reconvened.

Main Budget: IT WAS AGREED to accept the proposed budget, in so doing, there would be a 2.0% increase in the precept.

The total precept in the 17/18 year will be £62,484 plus the Library Surcharge of £16,000 totalling £78,484 (the precept in the year 16/17 was £61,259 plus Library Surcharge of £16,000 totalling £77,259).

The budget will be recommended to Full Council for approval on the meeting on the 30th November 2016.

5. Annual Internal Review

No changes to The Council's Internal Control Procedures and Risk Assessments financial processes had been recommended by the internal auditor.

6. Correspondence

i) Precept: The Council's Precept had to be decided by 31st December 2016 and the appropriate form completed. The Chairman of this committee would bring this to Council's attention at the November Full Council meeting.

ii) Review donation requests:

3 requested had been received.

- a) IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £100 be made to Colwall Village Society for the “Colwall Folk” publication.
- b) IT WAS RESOLVED that the donation of £700 be made Colwall PCC for the Church Maintenance, (subject to Full Council approval).
- c) IT WAS RESOLVED that a donation of £750 be made to the MHAONB for their contribution to the Parish (subject to Full Council approval).

iii) Colwall Parish Council donations - All donations will be paid in November 2016 as per the previously approved 2016/17 budget, with the exception of the donation for the Churchyard upkeep, which the committee is recommending to Full Council be increased to £700 (from £450).

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would be held on Wednesday 19th April 2017 with a short meeting called on the 14th December 2016 for the approval and signing of these minutes.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....