

WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14th January 2016 at 7.00 p.m. in the Whitnash Town Council office, Franklin Road, Whitnash.

PRESENT: Councillors: B Smart – Chairman
A Barton
P Birdi
S Button
Mrs J Falp
B Franklin
T Heath
R Margrave
S McFadden
T Shepherd
R Sparkes

Town Clerk: Jenny Mason

In attendance: Kerry Samperi – Finance Assistant

45/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Cancilla, Kirton and Short. Apologies were accepted.

46/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the start of the meeting.

47/16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 10th December 2015 as circulated were approved and signed as a true record.

48/16 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THOSE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

49/16 CONFIRM AND APPROVE PRECEPT FOR 2016 – 2017

The precept for 2016 – 2017 was confirmed and approved. The budgeted precept is £141,179 less council tax support grant will be £131,705 which

amounts to an annual increase of £4.60.

50/16 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

The income and expenditure report as at 31st December 2015 was forwarded to all Members. The overspends- insurance £14 and Kaspersky anti-virus £21 were both reported previously. The Christmas Lights expenditure is offset by income from donations/sponsors/raffle etc giving an overall gain £2576 which will be ring fenced at the year end.

51/16 WEBSITE

No job specification has been done for a Webmaster so the Tender has not been advertised. Cllr Mrs Falp asked the Clerk to contact our HR Contractor to find out what the cost would be for him to supply a specification for us. The cost is estimated at +-£280. Cllrs Heath and Mrs Falp proposed that we ask the HR consultant to supply us with a specification once This is Identity has uploaded the relevant documents and carried out more training.

The website does need development work. Cllr Birdi has spoken to This is Identity to ask them to upload the documents needed for the Transparency Code. He has also asked them to organise another training session with the staff as well as Councillors Birdi and Margrave.

52/16 CORRESPONDENCE

1. Email correspondence has been received from WALC regarding the 2017 – 2018 Auditing process. The deadline for councils to decide to opt out of the sector led body arrangement is to be extended to 31st March 2016. NALC has set up an organisation, Sector Led Body, to let the contracts for the external audit of parish and town councils. This will succeed the present contracts which ends in 2017. Councils will be deemed to have opted in to the Sector Led Body contract if they do not decide to opt out by 31st March, and notify the Sector Led Body that they have done so. If Councils chose to opt out they have to be able to make a formal declaration about a number of points that are embedded in the legislation. WALC would strongly recommend that Councils have an external auditor, but if you decide to go outside of the Sector Led Body you have to meet certain criteria about audit panels which will be expensive for an individual Council to comply with and they are making it deliberately difficult to withdraw. If Councils do stay in it will be fixed for 5 years - after which you will be able to reconsider.

Members proposed the Council opts in to the Sector Led Body audit and establishes what the new auditing costs will be.

2. Spending Review Briefing Note from WALC indicating that the mechanism behind the council tax support grant that is passed on to towns and parishes is to be phased out (no time-frame is stipulated) and also that there will be an announcement about caps on precepts that may result in a referendum having to be called in order to exceed it. It also suggests that Towns and Parishes should be building relationships with Local Authorities around double devolution down to neighbourhood level.

53/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 31st March 2016 at 7.00 p.m.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

SIGNEDDATE