



HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE, BUDGET, RESOURCES AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

REPORT (Minutes)

of the meeting of the Finance, Budget and Resources Committee,
held at the Fleur de Lys Council Chambers, Market Street, Hailsham
On Wednesday 13th September 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

Prior to commencement of formal business, a period of not more than 15 minutes was assigned for the purpose of permitting members of the public to address the Committee or ask questions (on matters relevant to the responsibilities under the direction of this committee).

The Chairman read out Mr K Hinton letter, in relation to opening the budget process to public consultation. The Committee agreed that the Council's budget process was available to the public and is transparent as per the current legislation. It was agreed that a budget information will be published in the Our Town newsletter.

FBR/17/3/3
1 **Present:** F. Berry, N. Collinson, N. Coltman, R. Grocock, Mrs.M. Laxton, G. Moore, M. Pinkney.

32 **Officers Present:** Mr J. Harrison (Town Clerk) & Mrs M. Hagger (Finance Officer)

33 **Apologies For Absence:** Cllr J. De Jongh & Cllr C. Triandafyllou

34 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr R. Grocock declared an interest in agenda item 4.2

35 **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

RESOLVED to note and accept the Minutes and Reports of the Meeting of the Finance, Budget & Resource Committee (Ref: FBR/17/3/24-30) held on the 26th July 2017 as being a correct record of this meeting.

36 **Accounts and Audit – Budget for 2018-2019**

36.1 Cllr Laxton inquired about the Council's current contract and tender process, The town clerk advised that this is not covered under this agenda, it was agreed that it would be an item on the October FBRC agenda.

36.2 The Chairman introduced the summary of committee estimates for 2018-19

Discussion ensued in relation to the following areas of the budget papers.

Cllr Berry inquired if the Council Tax cap will be in place this coming November, The Town Clerk advised that there has been no decision from Central Government on this matter.

The Finance Officer advised that the budget at present is showing a draw from reserves of £1,986.00 which would relate to an additional 15.69 homes in the tax base.

The Finance Officer advises that to cover the shortfall at present and that the budget is still a fluid document. The Council would need to increase the band D precept per house by 0.5% which equates to 63p per house per year.

Cllr Collinson mentioned that the due to changes in the Public Sector pay cap and the position is unknown on what effect this will have on the Council, it maybe necessary to increase the precept above 0.5%.

Cllr Coltman inquired about the Welbury Farm Community, The Finance Officer advised that the expenditure is the running costs and the set-up costs will be Capital Expenditure from Reserves.

The Finance Officer advised Cllr Collinson that the Members Allowances is increased as best practice as the Council does not hear from Wealden District Council Numeration Panel until after the budget is set.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the service charge at 2 North Street has increased and that this information came in after these budget papers.

Cllr Coltman inquired if the Council Tax Support grant is guaranteed, The Town Clerk advised that there has been no information from Wealden District Council to advise otherwise.

Discussion ensued regarding the increase of the Band D by 1% to cover the potential increase discussed earlier. The Finance Officer advised that this increase would be sufficient.

37. **RESOLVED** that the band D precept be increase in 2018 -19 by 1%.
38. Western Rd Cricket Pavilion – Cllr Berry inquired if the letter had been sent to the Cricket Club, The Town Clerk stated that it was a recommendation to Full Council.
40. Cllr Grocock asked about the Public Toilet cleaning contract, The Town clerk advised that the deadline had been extended but at present we have only received 2 quotes.
41. The Finance Officer spoke of potential savings or possible income to the Council.

The Cleaning of the Council Offices, The Finance Officer advised that the Officers would be willing to undertake this in house, saving a possible £4,000 per year.
42. **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Finance Officer looks at detailed costings and report back to the next FBRC meeting in October.
43. PAT Testing to be undertaken by a member of the Outdoor works team, The Finance Officer to consider the insurance and legal requirements and report back at the next FBRC meeting.

44. Offering ROSPA playground inspections to smaller parish and town councils, by a ROSPA qualified member of the outdoor works team, The Town clerk to speak to other Councils at the next clerks meeting to see if there would be an interest for this.
45. Cllr Collinson would like it noted how grateful the committee is for the Officers incentives.
46. Cllr Berry inquired about the Allotments at Battle Road waste collection being reduced are the Council still looking at the rent increase of 10% to continue, Cllr Collinson advised that the increase will remain until they are cost natural.
47. Cllr Collinson inquired how much is the cost of the Fishing Permits, The Finance Officer will advise.
NB: The Fishing Permits are £45.00 and £25.00 for OAP & Disabled.
48. Cllr Laxton enquired if we have reviewed the Honorarium payments to the Tree Warden, Pond Warden and Water Bailiff. The Town Clerk has advised that there had not been reviewed. Cllr Laxton requested a report on what the roles are and how frequent.
49. Cllr Collinson what further information on the Allotment Key deposit figure for Actual 2016/17. The Finance Officer will email the Committee further information.
50. Cllr Grocock left the meeting as he declared an interest in this agenda item as he is the Chairman of Environment Hailsham

Cllr Coltman was elected chairman for this item on the agenda.

Cllr Collinson advised that this item is to be discussed as we need a separate Grant section for the selection we pay year on year.

The Committee would like a review system in place for the going grants to CAB and HOPS.

Discussion ensued in depth regarding how to account for the various grants. The grants panel to review what other organisation will be allocated to the fixed grants and or discretionary grant.

The Town Clerk stated that the grants criteria to be review every year and that organisations should report on how the grants awarded where spend.

51. **RESOLVED** to recommend increase the total grant amount to £30,000.00
52. **RESOLVED** to recommend amend the grants budget to be aligned to Fixed Grants for £20,000 and Discretionary grants for £10,000.00.
53. Cllr Grocock returned to the meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm

CHAIRMAN