



HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE, BUDGET, RESOURCES AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

REPORT (Minutes)

of the meeting of the Finance, Budget and Resources Committee,
held at the Members Room, Market Street, Hailsham
On Wednesday 10th July 2019 at 7.00 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).

FBR/19/2/1 **Present:** Cllr.R. Grocock (Vice Chairman), Mrs. B. Holbrook (Sub for G. Blake-Coggins), K Hinton, P. Holbrook, T. Powis

2. **Officers Present:** Mr J. Harrison (Town Clerk) & Ms M. Foster (Finance Officer)

3. **Apologies For Absence:** Cllr G. Blake-Coggins

4. **Declarations of Interest:** None

5. **Accounts and Audit – Budget for 2020-2021**

6. The Finance Officer explained the report to the committee explaining the following amendments to the forthcoming year's budget, the following items where discussed:

. 3% increase across most of the budget areas as per the five-year budget set out in the council's business plan.

. Additional funding for Dog bin waste collection of £19,700.00, due to expensive costs to get dog waste collected and disposed of.

6.1 Cllr Grocock asked the Finance Officer to work out the cost per bin per year, so that the Council fully understand the actual cost of installing a new dog bin. The Finance officer will email the details to the committee.

6.2 Cllr P Holbrook enquired about having advertising on any new dog bins from local pet shops, to help with the costs of the bins.

. Continued funding for SOX street lighting repairs agreed by full council for £17,297.00

. Staffing costs to be adjusted to reflect scale point movements, pension costs and 2% pay increase as per government notification, this is PENDING as information due in the Autumn.

. James West income for hire/lettings is now built into the budget.

7. The committee then discussed the other factors in the Finance Officers report.

. 4 Market Square is currently empty due to tenant ceasing agreement, so this budget may have to be removed - £6,500.00

- 7.1 Cllr R Grocock asked about an update, the Town Clerk advised that there is some interest and he is perusing that lead at present.
- 7.2 The Town Clerk inquired about Pest Control at the cemetery, The Finance Officer advised that the previous year budget was very low, and due to a couple of issues last year, to increase the budget to £300.00
- 7.3 . The Horticultural and grass cutting contract is out to tender later this year. The committee should be advised of the figures in the Autumn, at present the potential increase of £5,000 to the horticultural contract as due to take on a new Public open space and increase of £6,000.00 for grass cutting at the cemetery, this is due to current contractor under quoting.
- Cllr B Holbrook spoke about complaint of the grass at the cemetery. The finance officer advised that we have complaints about grass cutting in general. The Town Clerk advised that the additional cost of picking up the grass cuttings is very high and has been looked at in the past.
- Cllr Powis commented on the issue at the Maurice Thornton playing field regarding grass cutting. Cllr Powis enquired if there is a need of an additional cut on Maurice Thornton. The Finance Officer advised that the Outdoor works supervisor and the Deputy Town Council will be reviewing the contents of our contract to ensure that all the needs of the council will be fulfilled.
- 7.4 The vehicle leasing contract is due for renewal in March 2020, as such we will not know the actual expenditure costs for 2020-2021 in time for the budget setting, on advice of the Deputy Town Clerk, a 10% increase (£1,000) in the budget would be prudent.
- Cllr Hinton enquired how this contract is renewed, The Finance Officer advised that it go out to tender.
- The Town Clerk advised that there is a motion to council next week regarding Eco-friendly Council, and one of the options is Hybrid vehicle.
- Cllr Powis advises that fuel costs would be saved using an Electric vehicle for the vehicle used mainly around the town centre.
- 7.5 . All hire and letting fees of properties/playing fields need to be reviewed (except James West due to recent setup), as these rates have not been reviewed or adjusted since April 2007.
- The Finance Officer went through the council current prices of the halls, and comparison of other halls in the surrounding area.
- Cllr Hinton queried what the income for the halls where last year, The Finance Officer advised that the MT Pavilion was £800, and the Fleur de Lys meeting room was £3,800 and agreed that there should be a review.
- The Finance Officer advised that the playing field had no hire charges for use by the Football club. The works supervisor had done some research of other council's charges, and the Finance Officer advised that costs for pitch marking, grass cutting.
- The Finance Officer stated that new open space will come online and there maybe a similar scenario at that site, and it needs to be looked at across the board.
- Cllr Powis voiced concerns of charging sports clubs, when Hailsham is short of sports facilities.

The Finance Officer advised the report and details of charges will be sent out with the minutes of this meeting.

7.5 The Finance Officer advised that the factors for discussion have not been adjusted in the budget, but they will be when the papers go to the committees in August/September and explained the change in budget setting process for 2020-2021.

7.6 The Finance officer advised that we will not know the tax base until early December.

Cllr Hinton enquired how the budget is set and why 3% increase, The Finance officer advised it is inline with the business plan, and where the budgets are underspent, it has not been unnecessarily increased. The budget process should include potential savings between committees/officers. Have more narrative regarding the budget which is more details available to the public.

Cllr Powis queried items over spend in last year's budget, do we investigate these, The Finance Officer advised that they looked into and considered in the coming years budget.

Cllr P Holbrook requested the Chairman's Allowance be discussed and reviewed, The Town Clerk and The Finance Officer, explained that the council has possibly been accounting for the Chairman differently. The chairman allowance will be reviewed for 2020-2021 within the budget papers.

8.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

To resolve that due to the special and confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, and possible disclosure of personal or legal information not in the public interest at the present time, the following items of business be transacted following the temporary exclusion of members of the Public and Press, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders No. 1E.

Agenda Item 7: Communication and Public Information Officer

Agenda Item 8: Honorarium

Agenda Item 9: Finance Officer

The reason for exclusion for this agenda item is:

(b) Engagement, terms of service

9.

Deputy Youth Co-Ordinator

The Town Clerk explained the rational behind this change of job description.

Cllr Hinton stated that when this agenda item goes before council more details behind the change in the scope of services offered by the Youth Service over the years should be included.

RESOLVED to recommend to council the revised hours/job description and pay scale of the Deputy youth Co-Ordinator position

10.

Honorarium

The Finance Officer explained the reasoning behind the agenda item, and that it had not been reviewed for many years.

RESOLVED to investigate further, by liaising with the relevant officers, regarding details

11. of hours, work undertaken and report back to the next budget setting meeting.

Finance Officer

RESOLVED to recommend to council that the revised remuneration undertaken and amend the role accordingly.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm

CHAIRMAN