



Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Sub Committee held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 16 November 2021 at 4pm.

Councillors present:

Desna Allen	Jenny Budgell
Declan Baseley	Pete Cousins (Vice Chairman)
Gemma Grimes	Chris Ruck
John Scragg	Matthew Short (Chairman)
Myla Watts	

Officers present: Mark Smith, Chief Executive
Matt Kirby, Director of Community Services
Nick Rees, Director of Resources
Gillian Ballinger, Head of Finance
Heather Rae, Head of Democratic Services
Jess Mantell, Democratic Services Officer
Amy Abram, Finance Assistant
Ciaran Howell, Technician

Public present: None present

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no written or verbal questions from any member of the public.

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robert Giles due to being on holiday.

21. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTION

Councillor Chris Ruck substituted for Councillor Robert Giles.

22. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Jenny Budgell declared a non-pecuniary interest in any discussion relating to one of the Town Council's properties due to the tenant being a customer of the Councillor's business and regarding the Town Council's Christmas lights due to knowing one of the possible providers.

23. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 19 October 2021 were proposed by Councillor John Scragg, seconded by Councillor Declan Baseley and with all in favour, it was;

RESOLVED that

The minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 19 October 2021 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

24. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

25. UPDATE ON BUDGET SETTING FOR 2022/23

The Director of Resources updated Councillors on the progress with setting the Income and Expenditure (I&E) budget for 2022/23. It was noted that the number of properties that pay precept are likely to increase next year by 2%. The Director of Resources outlined the assumptions made in the proposed budget for 2022/23 on income returning to pre COVID levels and increasing where possible. It was noted that HR Committee met last week and recommend a payroll figure, there will be an addition of another £10,000 which covers cost of a market supplement and assumptions around pay increases at 1.75% from National Employers for Local Government.

Councillors questioned the detail of the proposed pilot Climate Donations Fund, how it would work and whether funds would be returned to the Council in the long term. The Director of Resources confirmed that the fund had been included in the budget as a provision and a report will be taken to Full Council outlining how it would work for Council approval. Councillors thanked the Finance team for their work and questioned whether, to highlight the importance of tourism, the promotion of tourism should be moved to the Marketing budget rather than being listed under events. The Director of Resources confirmed it could be moved to another cost centre.

Councillors questioned whether it would be possible to have a separate fund for Monkton Park as other areas are such as John Coles Park and whether funds for tree planting were included. The Director of Resources confirmed that tree planting is a separate capital fund, and that John Coles Park is a long-standing cost centre, all other outdoor space is combined due to staff working across sites. It was confirmed that the Monkton Park Management Plan for next year is budgeted for under Capital / Ear Marked Funds (C/EMF).

The Director of Resources updated Councillors on the progress with setting the C/EMF budget for 2022/23. It was noted that there were two strategic development items with a proposed budget of £200,000 each to be considered within the C/EMF budget for 2022/23 (Environmental Improvements to the Council's Estate and Neeld entrance/bar/booking office project). Councillors discussed the proposed strategic development items and supported in principle both the Environmental Improvements to the Council's Estate and the Neeld entrance/bar/booking office project. It was confirmed that all items marked on the capital budget proposal funded by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) had been approved by Wiltshire Council as suitable use of CIL. It was noted that the Council's

General Reserves were separate to C/EMFs, and the level for 2022/23 would be £894,000 which was in line with sector guidance of 25% of precept.

Councillors considered whether to set up a Finance Working Party to have less formal discussion during the budget setting process. The Director of Resources noted that a Working Party is an internal meeting where anything can be discussed including thoughts on the Council's aspirations for Capital, what it might need to spend and where money would come from. The discussion could happen at the Finance Sub Committee or separately at a Working Party. Councillors noted that Councillors on the Finance Sub Committee had worked well together this year and did not want to take a backwards step to a Working Party. Councillors supported a more informal workshop meeting including all Councillors on the Finance Sub Committee, where outcomes and ideas could be brought to the formal Finance Sub Committee meeting for ratification. Councillors requested that meeting dates be arranged in advance and circulated for the year.

RESOLVED that

i) Councillors agreed to recommend to the Strategy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 08 December 2021, that:

- a) The draft Income & Expenditure for 2022/23 be recommended to Full Council at its meeting on 12 January 2022;
- b) Routine Capital Ear Marked Fund expenditure of £469k be included in the Council's C/EMF budget for 2022/23 and £357k of CIL Income be used to fund this.

ii) Councillors agreed to recommend to the Strategy & Resources Committee that two further large projects be included in the Council's C/EMF budget for 2022/23, both funded by CIL Income, namely:

- a) Environmental Improvements to the Council's Estate £200k
- b) Neeld entrance/bar/booking office project £200k

iii) Councillors agreed that officers organise an informal workshop for Councillors on the Finance Sub Committee to develop the Council's MTFP for C/EMFs.

26. ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION

Councillors did not request any specific items for communication.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Finance Sub Committee will take place on Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 4pm.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Signed on behalf of the Town Council as a true record of the meeting.

Signature

Date