



**A Meeting of the Employment, Finance & Policies Committee was held
on Monday 15th January 2018 at 7.30 pm,
The Amesbury Room, Winscombe Community Centre.**

Committee Members Present: Mr. Chris Ballard (CB), Ms Cresten Boase (CBo), Mr. Archie Forbes (AF), Ms. Janet Corry, Mr. Kevin Joyce, Mr. Gerald Lloyd (GL), Dr Paul Watkins, Mr. John Westlake (JW), Mr. Mike Williamson (MW) (Committee Chairman).

Members of Public Present: One

Clerk: Mrs Lynne Rampton (LR)

- 1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr V Slater
- 2 **Declarations of Interest.** No interests were declared
- 3 **Public Participation.** There was none
- 4 **Minute Update from the previous minutes dated 6th November 2017.** There were no updates required
- 5 **2017/18 Budget Summary to 31st December 2017 *Annex 1***
The committee examined the budget summaries for the period, along with bank reconciliation to 31st December 2017. With no deviations aside from virements agreed by full council, it was anticipated that all budget heads were on course to remain within the predicted budget totals. There were no questions and members were encouraged to inspect original supporting documents in the Parish Office.

6. **To agree regular payments from bank account to be made by standing order and direct debit.**
To reduce time spent preparing regular cheques or on-line direct payments, it was proposed that the following payments continue to be made directly from the bank account.

It was proposed that the following payments be made by direct debit or standing order for the 2018/19 financial year:

Regular payments already made by direct debit or standing order – reaffirmed for 2018/19

DD	Public Works Loan	Frequency – half yearly
DD	BT telephone lines x 2	Frequency – quarterly
DD	Bristol Water WMRG	Frequency – twice yearly
DD	Bristol Water cem & allots	Frequency – twice yearly
DD	Bristol Water – public conveniences	Frequency – twice yearly
DD	EDF – electricity WMRG	Frequency – monthly
DD	SUEZ – waste collection at WMRG	Frequency - monthly
DD	SSE – parish street lighting supply	Frequency – monthly
SO	SSC – parish street light maint	Frequency – quarterly
SO	All staff salaries and pension contribution	Frequency – monthly
DD	Information Commissioners Office - data protection	Frequency - annually
DD	NSC non domestic rates - Cemetery & Allotments	Frequency - monthly
DD	Grenke - photocopier lease rental	Frequency – quarterly
DD	Southern Electric - electricity supply @ Toilets	Frequency - monthly
SO	T Nyamunda – grass hedge cut & open of Toilets	Frequency - monthly

Proposed: Cllr A Forbes Seconded: Cllr C Ballard All in favour

7. **Current Banking Arrangements – to authorise closure of an unused Youth Council Account.** It was explained that the account was originally opened when a PC Youth Council was active in the original planning and installation of the skate park at the Recreation Ground. The account had remained dormant for the best part of 10 years and it is recommended by the PC Internal Auditor that this account is now closed. ***It was recommended to the Parish Council that the Youth Council Account (balance £91.98) is closed with funds transferred into the HSBC current account. Funds offset against current skate park expenditure.*** Proposed by CBo, seconded by GLL, all in favour

8. **Budget Planning for the 2018/19 financial year & to agree a precept figure for recommendation to the full Parish Council *Annex 2***
Projected expenditure January – March 2018.

A report of equipment failure in a play piece similar to one currently installed at the Winnowing end Play Area was presented to the meeting. This had involved a timber framed tyre swing, that due to water ingress over a period of time had rotted the frame internally leading to what could have been a catastrophic failure of the

frame, and accident involving a child. It has now been recommended that on similar equipment, the main beam is dismantled and inspected with some urgency in similar units if these that are in excess of 5 years old. It was not believed that a resistograph survey would show the full extent of any internal rot. **As the timber framed tyre swing at Wincoving End was believed to be around 20 years old, the Clerk was instructed to take this out of action immediately with the Parish Council to consider its entire removal and replacement at their meeting on 22nd January (replacement cost c £5,500).** Proposed by CBo, seconded by AF, all members were in favour.

There were no further areas of expenditure identified by members other than those detailed on the circulated list.

Draft budget proposals for 2018/19 circulated in advance of the meeting were fully discussed with a careful examination of the figures making up the proposed Precept demand taking place.

The main points of note being:

- a. The NSC Council Tax Support Grant has been reduced each year and will be completely withdrawn by 2019/20. For the forthcoming year, the grant has reduced from £3,521 to £1,795.11.
- b. **Skate-park half-pipe.** The equipment, currently on order will be installed before the school summer holidays 2018. This is now to be funded through a s106 agreement from The Chestnut housing development.
- c. **6m high Space Net, WMRG.** Again to be largely funded through s106 monies, although a small amount had been included in the precept figures to allow this to be entirely installed on safety matting.
- d. **Fees and charges for the forthcoming year were considered:**
 - Cemetery fees** as recommended by the C&A Committee were agreed with no change in 2017.
 - Allotment fees** are to remain unchanged at £15.00 per annum for a half plot.
 - WMRG sports pitch rental charges and changing room maintenance contributions from sports clubs.** A steady increase has been applied over recent years and it was proposed that this trend continues for both contributions for use of the grounds and towards changing room maintenance.
Sports clubs contribution for the use of the grounds should increase from £500 to £550 per annum for each club using pitches. Sports clubs contribution towards changing room maintenance should increase from £500 to £550 per annum for each club using the facility.
- e. **Salaries** – A budget for projected expenditure was set by the meeting. Any increases to salaries would be considered by the committee following annual staff appraisals. It was noted that under national contract a 2% salary increase for the Clerk was likely.
- f. **Website and mobile app** – when investigating the introduction of a mobile app in 2016, it was ascertained that the current PC website was not mobile friendly or responsive and therefore money would not have been best spent on an app at that time. The committee were asked again to decide if they wished to upgrade the current website into a mobile responsive form, before considering if they wished to proceed with a mobile app. A quotation to upgrade the current website with our existing support company had been included in the draft budget along with a sum for the mobile app and this figure was to remain on budget, with the committee to make a decision on this during the course of the next year.
- g. **Grants and donations.** A list of regular donations as well as grant applications received has been included within the budgets. Members supported payment of grants/donations to Winscombe Youth Club, NSC Strawberry Line (for maintenance works in this parish), Millennium Green Trust (contribution for attendance at annual Fair), Royal British Legion (for the purchase of two poppy wreaths for armistice Sunday), Village Traders (contribution to annual Christmas Shopping Evening) and Winscombe Rugby Club (or other organisation to man road closure points for the Christmas Shopping Evening).
Due to further reductions in public transport for the parish a grant of £1,000 was agreed for the Churchill & Langford Minibus Society towards insurance costs for their second minibus. Proposed by CBa, seconded by KJ, 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.
It was recommended that an application for replacement fencing from the Millennium Green Trust was refused due to the general level of reserves held by that group (Proposed by PW, seconded by CBo, 8 in favour, 1 against). An amount was included within the budget head for further small grant applications. A commendable project to mark the 100 year anniversary of the end of WW1 was to take place in the parish and an application for £5,000 towards this had been verbally made. With no firm plans known of, members considered the project to be expensive in volunteer time rather than justified financially. As the group had no formal constitution or group bank account, the request was refused at this time, Proposed by CBo, seconded by KJ, 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.
- h. **Parish Council borrowing.** To allow much needed refurbishment of the Woodborough Road Public Conveniences c £23,000, the Parish Council should consider applying for permission to borrow funds

from the PWLB. Repayments for a loan had been included in the budget proposals, with a term of no longer than 10 years to be considered. A full report would be submitted to council prior to an application being made.

- i. **Parish Street Lighting** – In recent years, provision has been made within earmarked reserves towards a replacement lighting programme. The Parish Council is responsible for just over 100 street lights in the parish, most of which are of nearing the end of their useful life with replacement parts no longer available as they fail. Earmarked reserves towards this project should be increased by £2,000 for the forthcoming financial year.
- j. **War Memorial Recreation Ground Advisory Committee** – existing pitch barriers for the first team football pitch are in a poor condition with the football club requesting these are replaced with a UPVC type post and rail fence. The committee had included £4000 in their 2017/18 budgets and this amount should be carried forward into the 2018/19 financial year with grant funding sought to finance the balance of those costs.
- k. **Community fund and miscellaneous expenditure.** The Parish Council has over the past two years included a section of the budget for community projects, or to help out when assistance such as NSC funding for school crossing patrols been withdrawn. The committee wished to continue with this funding and consideration may be given to financing the current weekly Citizens Advice Outreach Service should a need in this parish be proven and if current funding for this be withdrawn (cost to host a fortnightly service would be c £4,500 pa).
- l. **Insurance – revaluation of Parish owned buildings.** Our current insurers recommend re-valuation of buildings every 5 years or so, or after significant works. Provision has been made within the budget for revaluation for insurance purposes of the cemetery store building and public conveniences following refurbishment/construction works to both.
- m. **Parish Council Notice Boards** – our three noticeboards are deteriorating through age, and replacement of these would be needed imminently. Due to current budget constraints, Parish Orderlies should be asked to refurbish these in the first instance prior to replacement.
- n. **Ear marking of Cemetery fees** – to allow resurfacing of the car park at the cemetery to take place, fees received should continue to be earmarked towards cemetery improvements.

The Employment, Finance & Policies Committee recommend to the full Parish Council that the projected forecast figures (2017/18) and budget as detailed is approved. This would result in a Precept figure for the 2018/2019 financial year to be increased from £130,000 to £134,000 and would mean a Local Council Element of Headline Council Tax per D Band property increase from £66.49 to £68.28 which is equivalent to a 2.7% increase per 'D' band equivalent on the current financial year.
Proposed: Cllr A Forbes Seconded: Cllr K Joyce All in favour

9. Matters for Information – either points of information or subjects for discussion at next meeting.

 Meetings:

- 1. A change to the Cemetery & Allotment Group meeting – 19th March to 19th February
- 2. An additional Employment, Finance & Policies meeting will take place on 19th March to consider Staffing Matters and Standing Orders along with Committee Terms of Reference (ToFR) – all Chairmen asked to submit comments on current ToFR before end of January 2018.
- 3. Meeting request with Parish Councillors from Thatchers – meeting to take place on 6th February, 7pm at Winscombe Community Centre to hear of planning applications

Meeting Closed: 9.30 pm

Signed Employment, Finance & Policies Committee Chairman

Date