

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN
THE COUNCIL OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, ON WEDNESDAY 18TH JANUARY 2012 AT
7.30PM

Present: Councillor C Francis-Pester Committee Chairman
Councillor, C. Blades, B. Garner, J Geldart, G Hill, L. Little, J Middleton, T.
Morgan, J. Norton-Sealey, D. Shopland & C. Wring.
Town Clerk – Ms P. Heath,
In Attendance – Cllr L Knott,

FGP 12/200 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors, C Hall (other commitment) and A Walker (illness)

FGP 12/201 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There was one declaration of interest on items on the agenda, a pecuniary interest was declared by Cllr Morgan in respect of agenda item 11 review of library services

FGP 12/202 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2011 - PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED.

The minutes of the Finance & General Policy Committee meetings held on 23rd September 2011 and ratified at council on 4th January were accepted.

FGP 12/203 RECEIVE AND AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 12TH JANUARY 2012

Proposed seconded and **AGREED** to accept the minutes of the special meeting held on 12th January 2012.

Members confirmed the **RECOMMENDATION** to be forwarded to the Precept Meeting on 25th January 2012

*Proposed by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Hill and **Recommend** by 9 votes to 0 to the FGP Committee on 18th January the preferred contractor as announced at the Council Meeting.*

FGP 12/204 RECEIVE AND DISCUSS THE CURRENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGET SHEETS – ATTACHED.

Following a discussion Members noted the financial sheets that had been circulated with the agenda.

FGP 12/205 RECEIVE FURTHER INFORMATION AS REQUESTED FOR FUNDING FROM NS CITIZEN ADVICE FOR 2012/2013

Cllr Garner declared a personal interest as the Town Councils representative.

A copy of the information provided by the CAB had been circulated with the agenda. Members' discussed the information and the importance in organisations such as CAB in providing help and guidance in the current financial climate. Concern was expressed that the Council may not be able to continue to support many of the organisations that have had donations and grants in the past.

Proposed by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Blades and **AGREED** that the proposed grant in the budget request should be £20,000 for the financial year 2012/2013. It was further agreed that all organisations be given notice that grants are awarded year on year basis and may be reduced in 2013/2014.

FGP 12/206 DISCUSS COMMITTEE BUDGET REQUESTS FOR 2012/2013 AS CIRCULATED (COLOUR PINK); TO RECEIVE SUMMARY AND INFORMATION ON RESERVES (COLOUR BLUE) AND MAKE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL FOR THE PRECEPT, TO BE AGREED AT THE PRECEPT MEETING ON 25TH JANUARY 2012

Members went through the detailed proposed budget sheets page by page querying amounts in the budget and assessing the background calculations.

4158/104 Rangers Events Grant – proposed by Cllr Morgan, seconded by Cllr Blades and **AGREED** to reduce the proposed grant from £3000 to £1500 in line with the grant given in 2011/2012.

Town Events & Amenities budget allocation

Flowerbeds – a proposal by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Morgan to reduce the budget from £10,000 to £9000 was defeated by 5 votes to 6 against.

Diamond Jubilee - It was noted the budget agreed at Council had not been added to the figures presented at the meeting.

Members discussed the reserves held by Council, the Town Clerk as RFO explained that the recognised bench mark for reserves was approximately 50% of the Councils running costs. Members discussed the taking of money from reserves to reduce the precept and the detrimental impact this would have on future precept request when reserves could no longer be used. Members felt that the precept should be increase to represent closer the real cost of running the Council. It was noted that Clevedon's precept was one of the lowest in North Somerset, and considerably less than Nailsea, Portishead and Weston.

Proposed by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Wring that the precept increase should be 2% from £20.75 to £21.17 per year on band D an increase of 0.009p per week

An amendment by Cllr Morgan, seconded by Cllr Garner that the precept increase should be 5% on band D from £20.75 to £21.78 an increase on band D of 0.019p per week

The amendment was **AGREED** by a vote of 8 to 2 and as the substantive motion by 8 to 2.

The **RECOMMENDATION** to the Precept Meeting is a precept increase of 5% from £20.27 to £21.75; an increase of 2p per week on band D properties.

FGP 12/207 RECEIVE AND NOTE THE RESPONSE FROM THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS [FGP 11/184]

Members noted the response from the External Auditor.

FGP 12/208 RECEIVE EMAIL FROM RBL REQUESTING PAYMENT FOR BAND AT REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE,

Members discussed the email from the Royal British Legion requesting 50% of the band fee for Remembrance Day. A copy of the decisions taken in the past relating to payment for the band was circulated with the agenda. Members commended the work of the RBL and their support to the Councils ceremony in Queen Square every year.

Proposed by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Hill and **AGREED** to pay 50% of the 2011 bill at £175.00

Proposed by Cllr Shopland, seconded by Cllr Hill and **AGREED** that an allocation be made from the grants budget to pay 50% of the bands bill each year up to a cost of £500.00

FGP 12/209 RECEIVE LETTER FROM CLLR PHIL JUDD ASKING FOR REPRESENTATIVE ON STEERING GROUP FOR A COMMUNITY COVENANT.

Members discussed the paperwork circulated with the agenda. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Garner would be the Town Council's representative reporting back to the FGP on any decisions made.

FGP 12/210 RECEIVE AND DISCUSS DETAILS OF NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL LIBRARY REVIEW PER ATTACHED EMAIL.

Cllr Morgan declared a prejudicial interest as his wife is employed at Clevedon Library.

A copy of the consultation documents had been circulated with the agenda these show that Clevedon Library opening hours would be cut and an automated system would be introduced cutting down on staff requirements.

Members noted that all the libraries would have reduced hours except for the Campus at Weston and the Library in the Town Hall at Weston. Members were informed that staff members at the library were under redundancy notices. The use of volunteers was also discussed; members were informed that due to Data Protection not all the systems would be available for volunteer workers to use.

Proposed by Cllr Shopland and **AGREED** to write to NSC objecting to the reduction in hours at Clevedon Library and requesting reasons why the Libraries in Weston had their hours increased.

FGP 12/211 CHAIRMAN ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

There were no Chairman's items for information

FGP 12/212 TO DETERMINE PART I AND PART II ITEMS.

There is only the Budget as part 1 this will be discussed and agreed at the Precept meeting on 25th January.

The meeting finished at 9.20 pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN Date