



ALBRIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING Wednesday 5th December 2018 at 10am in the Council Meeting Room

Present:

Cllrs T Maguire (Chairman), P Woodman, R Smith, P Harrison, M Pitchford

In Attendance:

Shirley Reynolds, Clerk to the Council

0035. Apologies

To receive and approve apologies for absence. Members are asked to give their apologies direct to the Parish Clerk.

None all members present

0036. Declarations of interest

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. Members must fill out the declarations of interest forms for submission.

Where a member indicates that they have a prejudicial interest but wish to make representation regarding the item before leaving the meeting, they must do so under item 4(D) of Public Participation.

None

0037. Minutes of previous meeting

To receive the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 19th November 2018 (to follow).

Cllr Maguire proposed that the minutes were a true and accurate record which was seconded and agreed by the committee.

0038. Matters arising

To consider any issues arising from the minutes that are not included on the agenda.

The Clerk updated Councillors on staffing, interviews for the Apprentice post are being undertaken this week, there have been some strong candidates and she is hopeful to be in a position to offer the apprenticeship post by Friday. Councillors inquired if there had been any local applicants and the Clerk confirmed that there had been which is what she had hoped.

0039 To receive the accounts and bank reconciliation for the Month ending 31st October 2018 – (enclosed)

The report from Cllr Maguire had already been circulated, the Clerk also provided the quarterly reports she had produced in order to help with the budget setting part of the agenda. Councillors agreed that these reports provided good detail on our financial position and it was suggested that these should be presented to all councillors in future at our monthly meetings.

0040 To consider budget setting for 2019/20 (enclosed)

To consider Albrighton Parish Councils priorities for the forthcoming year in order to inform the budget and setting the precept.

Councillors had a good robust discussion about the budget. The need to ear mark reserves was stressed and Councillors asked that the Clerk circulates again the list of priorities made earlier in the year and time will be taken at the next meeting to allocate reserve amounts to these as appropriate.

The Chairman asked about our reserve situation and the Clerk confirmed that she had contacted our new internal auditor who had given the advice that a council should have between 3- and 12-months' worth of expected expenditure in its general reserve. The Clerk had analysed our last two years expenditure and we are spending on average £13,000 per month so 6 months reserves for a council of our size would equate to £78,000.

The point was made that whilst we appear to have large reserves these will soon diminish if we cease to get £30,000 subsidy from Shropshire Council after next year and it is known that any support, we do receive will be on a diminishing basis anyway. The introduction of a future cap on council precepts also needs to be considered. The budget which had been prepared in conjunction with the Finance & Personnel Committee and the Clerk shows a current excess of expenditure over income of £22,793 per year without any increase in our precept. Councillors discussed issues of the cuts to local government and the potential devolved services to town & parish councils and that as a council we needed to consider the increase in our precept in readiness for this, there was a risk if this was not done and our subsidy was stopped the parish council could find themselves £50,000 adrift on a future budget. The increase of 20% on the precept was discussed the Clerk informed councillors that a band D property in Albrighton was

£72.91 a year, a 20% increase would mean a rise of £14.58 a year, a weekly increase of 28p and a daily increase of 4p Councillors expressed the need to sell a positive message to residents, if they want to protect services for the village like the library then this increase was necessary.

It was proposed by Cllr Maguire that a recommendation is made to full council to approve an increase in the precept of 19%, this was seconded and agreed by all councillors.

0041. To consider RBL Year End close down and training package

The Clerk had previously circulated details of the quote from Rialtas which would include the software specialists coming to APC to sit with the Clerk and the Chair of Finance & Personnel to close down our accounts and complete year end and set up the new year. Once this training has been completed, we would be in a position to do this for ourselves in the years to come. The Chairman expressed how please he was with the training he had received recently but this had only highlighted how many anomalies they were with our accounts and it would be very useful to take advantage of this service to ensure our accounts were put into order for the forthcoming new financial year.

It was proposed by Cllr Maguire, seconded and agreed by all the committee that the cost of this service was approved and the Clerk be instructed to book the end of year procedure with Rialtas as soon as possible.

0042. Items for the agenda for the next Finance & Personnel Committee meeting

- Reserves (clerk to circulate list of priorities again)
- Staffing update

0043. Date of next meeting – 18^h January 2019.

After the meeting the Chair of the Committee, Cllr. Maguire, went through and checked the petty cash account and the money in the cash box.