

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Baddeley
The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Salt
Councillor Court
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Hawley
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lovatt
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Wood
Councillor Whilding

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper
Sarah Haydon

Mrs Haydon was invited to join Councillors at the table.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Disclosable Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Interests Minute 14a: Councillor Rogers as Treasurer of Biddulph Festival. Minute 14b: Councillor Davies, a member of St Lawrence's Church. Minute 15: Councillor Lovatt as a board Member of CAB and governor of Knypersley School.

11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence and reasons accepted were received from:

Councillor Jackson
Councillor Redfern
Councillor Sheldon

Councillor Sheldon had sent copies of the Biddulph in Bloom report and an invitation to the AGM to be held on Wednesday 20 January 2016 at 7.15 pm in the Council Chamber. They would be circulated with these Minutes

12. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015 were confirmed, having been approved by Town Council on 16 June 2015.

13. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2015

The Summary Statement of Accounts to 31 December 2015 was moved Received and Approved; Proposed by Councillor Lovatt and Seconded by Councillor Hart.

14. BUDGET SETTING FOR 2016/17

a The Committee budgets were confirmed, as below.

1 BURIAL GROUNDS Fees from 1st April 2016

<u>New grave interment fee</u>	
Biddulph resident	£700
Staffordshire Moorlands	£1400
Other Areas	£2100
Re-opening	£350

<u>Interment of cremated remains in an existing grave</u>	
Biddulph Resident	£125
Staffordshire Moorlands	£250
Other Areas	£375

<u>Interment of cremated remains in Garden of Remembrance</u>	
Biddulph resident	£110
Staffordshire Moorlands	£220
Other Areas	£330

<u>Re-opening fee – Garden of Remembrance</u>	
Biddulph Resident	£110
Staffordshire Moorlands	£220
Other Areas	£330

<u>Half grave space – cremated remains</u>	
Biddulph resident	£350
Staffordshire Moorlands	£700
Other Areas	£1050
Re-opening fee	£350

<u>Memorial Fee</u>	£170
Half size	£85
Additional Inscription	£45
<u>Garden of Remembrance</u>	
Stones	£55
Vases	£55
Together	£100

Admin/search fee first 15 minutes free of charge

2 CIVIC

BUDGETED EXPENDITURE (2015-16)

Christmas Lights	21,000
Civic Allowance	4,165
Civic Expenditure	12,000
Events Director	8,920
Events	1,000

Festival	5,000
Market	4,000
Regeneration	0
Remembrance Sunday	100
Tourism	<u>3,000</u>

TOTAL **59,185**

INCOME/EXPENDITURE (to date):

Income:

Market	2,421
Sales	<u>101</u>

TOTAL **2,522**

Total expected out turn at year end: £3,250

Expenditure:

Christmas Lights	12,724 (plus final installation payment £4310 in Jan)
Civic Allowance	4,165
Civic Expenditure	1,697 (kissing gates project still ongoing)
Events Director	5,947
Events	711
Festival	5,000
Market	4,173
Regeneration	0
Remembrance Sunday	45
Tourism	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	34,462

Total expected out turn at year end: £59,185

3 GENERAL PURPOSES

Expenditure

	Estimated 2015-16	Actual to 1 Dec	Estimated 2016-17
Allotments	5000.00	1290.47	5000.00
Contingency	5000.00	0.00	5000.00
Lengthsman	5000.00	3825.00	5000.00
Woodhouse Burial Ground*	0.00	3199.26	0.00
Burial Grounds Maintenance	28000.00	17869.55	28000.00
	43000.00	26184.28	43000.00

*Note: WBG expenditure drawn from remaining allocated reserve, not General Purposes Committee budget

General Purposes Income

PROPOSED ROOM CHARGES – COUNCIL CHAMBER 2016/17

Councillor Hall felt that care should be taken with block bookings, which may exclude other users.

- a Business Hire
£25 per hour
£100 per ½ day
£150 per full day

- b Non-profit making
£12.50 per hour
£45 per ½ day
£75 per full day

- c Joint Meetings

It was confirmed that there was no charge for meetings in which the Town Council was a partner (eg District Council & County Council meetings, Friends of Biddulph Valley Park, Moorlands Partnership Board, Biddulph in Bloom). It was agreed to add the following to that list – Sports Council, Twinning, Fairtrade, Biddulph Community Festival, Mayor’s Race, defibrillator training.

It was Moved to reciprocate and to charge for room hire if this Council was charged.

4 PLANNING

Neighbourhood Plan Budget

<u>Expenditure</u>	£
Planning Support Consultants	8,000
Printing - leaflets, questionnaires, NP copies	7,000
Referendum expenses	3,000
Community events	1,000
Publicity	500
Traffic Management consultant	5,000
Materials	1,000
Other Costs	500

	26,000

 <u>Income</u>	 £
Locality Grant via the District Council	8,000

5 TOURISM

The Chair felt that this should be reduced to £2,000. This was approved

b Winder device for St Lawrence's Church clock requested by churchwarden; estimate of £3,896 received.

Councillor Davies left the meeting before discussion on the following item, returning afterwards.

Councillor Wood felt the amount was excessive as the clock was in working order and Councillor Salt felt it was a token gesture

The Chief Officer reminded members that it was a statutory duty of a Parish/Town Council to provide public clocks. Councillor Rogers asked if the amount could be paid over a number of years but the Chief Officer did not feel that Smith of Derby would be happy to do this.

Councillor Hall proposed that the item be referred to GP as there was unspent money in other budgets. This was Agreed.

15. PRECEPT 2016/17

The Precept requirements were confirmed, following information from the District Council on the Council Tax Support Grant and parish tax base figure. The Support Grant had been reduced by £5922.48 from £19905.07 in 2015/2016 to **£13,982.59 for 2015/2016.**

It was Moved to set the Precept for the 2015/16 Financial Year at £256,503.00 (two hundred and fifty-six thousand, five hundred and three pounds). This equates to a Precept Band D charge of £41.61. Councillor Lovatt proposed this Precept, saying that the justification for the increase was the importance of funding Town Deal and Regeneration projects; this was Seconded by Councillors Hawley and Hart.

16. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Town Council's Financial Regulations were reviewed, with amendments and additions as set out below to points 4.4 and 4.5.

- 4.4 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with **Part 2 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Council shall appoint an independent Internal Auditor, plus a Monitoring Councillor.** Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.5 The Internal Auditor shall carry out the work required by the RFO, or by the Council, with a view to satisfactory completion of the Internal Auditor's Report section of the Annual Return as compiled annually by the **Comptroller and**

Auditor General. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to Council in writing on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual report in respect of each financial year.

17. RISK ASSESSMENT

It was agreed that Town Council's Risk Assessment and procedures would be reviewed in individual committees throughout the year.

18. INTERNAL/EXTERNAL AUDIT

- a Ms Thompson had expressed willingness to continue in the position. It was moved to re-appoint Ms Thompson as the Internal Auditor for financial year 2016/17.
- b Discussion took place about the External Audit arrangements from 2017. The current contracts for the external audit of parish and town councils would run out in 2017. They were traditionally let by the Audit Commission, which the government had abolished. Now, councils must appoint their own external auditor when the current contract expired, or subscribe to a Sector Led Body which would procure external audit for them. NALC, the SLCC and the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) had jointly set up a sector led body.

It was moved to receive the introductory letter and fact sheet which had been issued by the three organisations responsible.

19. GRANT APPLICATIONS

The grant application form and conditions was reviewed with the following amendments and additions.

The following addition was made to Point 3 'Be prepared that evidence may be requested.'

Point 8 was amended to read 'All applications must include any appropriate plans, drawings, or other relevant information to enable the application to be accurately assessed. **This must include a current set of independently examined/audited accounts (a copy of a bank statement is not sufficient).'**'

Point 13 was amended to read 'Any awarded grant must be spent in this financial year ie by 31 March 2017, unless a written application for an extension is made to the Finance Committee by the 1st of March 2017. In this event an alternate date may be specified by which the expenditure must be made.'

The following addition was made to Point 17 'Late applications will not be considered.'

The last paragraph on the application form was amended to read 'Please return this completed application form and **a current set of independently examined/audited accounts (a copy of a bank statement is not sufficient) by 5.00pm on 13 May 2016. Late applications will not be considered.'**

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Signed Date