

Whittlesey Town Council

Finance & Policy Committee

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Monday 20th November 2017 at 6.00pm at Grosvenor House, Grosvenor Road, Whittlesey.

Present: Cllr Dorling, Butcher, Bristow, Mrs Jolley, Miscandlon

Officer in Attendance Mrs Sue Piergianni – Town Clerk & RFO

Recording: DS25 .DS2

P93/17 - To receive apologies from absent Members.

Cllr Mason (holiday), Cllr Wicks (holiday).

FP94/17.- Declaration of Members Pecuniary Interests, on items to be discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential under agenda item number FP103/17

Cllr Miscandlon is Whittlesey Town Council's representative on the Rural Citizens Advice

FP95/17 – Public Forum.

1 Member of the public was present.

FP96/17 - To confirm and sign the Minutes from the last meeting of the Finance & Policy on 16th October 2017.

Ratified: The Minutes were approved.

FP97/17 – Presentation from Dr Trevor Evans – Chairman of Trustees CA Rural Cambs.

WTC have supported the outreach services this year with a donation of £5,500.00, which has provided a qualified employee from the Rural Citizens Advice, they have seen 106 residents from Whittlesey 9 from elsewhere, additionally 62 residents from Whittlesey have been seen by other CA services. They estimate by the end of March they would have seen 325 residents with 1700 issues. The top three issues, being benefits, debt and financial service capability which is seeking to help people to manage their finances better. Increased demand in the use of their services, one main concern Dr Evans has is some of the volunteers have had to have additional training to deal with aggressive residents. Dr Evans has asked if WTC would be able to continue with the grant of £5,500.00 to fund the service, he further added that Whittlesey is currently receiving the roll out of Universal Credit (November 2017), people are having to wait up to twelve weeks for their first payment, some people don't understand they now receive all the benefit and must pay all their bills etc from this payment.

Where Universal Credit has been fully rolled out, it is pushing people further into debt and therefore putting more pressure on other services. They anticipate the demand on their services being much greater.

Members asked whether the emergency payment scheme in place and is it of any help – Dr Evans advised this is a very recent change from the government and not in fully in place.



Cllr Bristow asked whether places like Wisbech received more enquiries, Dr Evans confirmed at present they had dealt with over 300 residents.

The Chairman thanked Dr Evans for his presentation and advised the request will be considered during the forthcoming budget discussions.

FP98/17 Agenda Items for Discussion

- Draft Budget – 2018-2019

Members were advised by the Chairman that it is possible to obtain an extension to the time scale for preparing the budget for 2018/19, we have not required further time in the past and have no intention of requesting this unless necessary.

A draft proposal was provided to all members for comments and potential amendments. Those figures indicate a potential over spend of £7,281. Code 82 can be reduced by £500 (FP87/17 Agenda items for discussion). The allotment budget has been increased as the Town Council are responsible for the trees to the Eastern Boundary and they will require some works over the coming years, the Projects team are also still working on costs for repairs to the roadway.

The Chairman requested that all members feedback to the Clerk or himself before the end of November so that a refined version of this budget proposal may be presented at the December Full Council meeting for discussion/agreement. The draft budget will be submitted to the Council prior to the December meeting to allow reading time.

Cllr Dorling proposed the precept remain the same as 2017/18.

Members suggested have two running budgets, one for Grosvenor House and one for the new building to ensure any costs are clearly identifiable.

Members agreed to discuss the CCTV SLA at the Full Council meeting in December CCTV will be discussed at the next Full Council meeting in December after members have visited the CCTV control room.

Members discussed the donation budget as it was 10K, It was agreed that community groups and other potential applicants for grants should be 'educated' on the available options for funding including charities and various schemes that would potentially support the work they do. Suggestions included creating a briefing document and making it available to all applicants for S137 grants, adding it to the WTC website and publicising through all types of media including local magazines. Town Clerk and ED to start work on this with contributions from any WTC member welcome. The advice/information will need to be maintained and updated then the facility could be part of the marketing push for the parish.

- Approval of 'Public Participation Policy' deferred from Full Council 8th November 2017

Members agreed at Full Council to amend the wording of paragraph five in the rules section and insert after 'Line three ... for this session, 'The Councillor must move to the public gallery and must vacate their seat' then continue with This member ...

- Community Roadwatch - Pondersbridge – Cllr Miscandlon advised he had met with both Jason Ablewhite and the Chief Constable, where he presented them with the information from Community Roadwatch, Cllr Miscandlon, and are now endeavouring to arrange a meeting with the Chief Superintendent responsible for traffic.



FP99/17. Financials.

- Bank Reconciliation – The Chairman advised that the bank reconciliation received by members at the Full Council was unchanged, the Clerk would send a revised copy to members should there be any changes.
- Year to date Figures – The Chairman advised that we are 60% of the way through the year with a 40% spend on the budget. Members discussed training, the Clerk was asked to find the costs for Cllr training.
- Cllr Butcher advised members that as he was not attending any functions at the moment, could the last quarter of his Mayors allowance be given to Cllr Mrs Windle who was attending many functions on his behalf. Cllr Bristow suggested that this be discussed at Full Council, the Clerk did not deem this necessary as the allowance had been given to the Mayor for him to do what was necessary, however she advised she would investigate and report back.
- Payment List for approval – There were no payments for approval
- Uncashed Payments - There were no uncashed payments
- To approve Citizens Advice Rural Cambs quarterly invoice – Payment was proposed by Cllr Bristow, seconded Cllr Miscandlon with a unanimous vote in favour.

FP100/17 - Donation Requests.

There were no donation requests

FP101/17 – Information

There was no information

FP102/17 – Date of Next Meeting – Monday 18th December 2018

FP103/17. Exclusion of the Public, including the Press.

Meeting Closed at 19.12



Cllr Eamonn Dorling
Chairman
Finance & Policy Committee