

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING OF SAUGHALL AND SHOTWICK PARK PARISH COUNCIL held on 13 January 2014 at the Vernon Institute, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor Mrs J Edwards
Councillor Mrs K Ford
Councillor DF Holman
Councillor H Jennings
Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor JE Storrar
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor Andrew Warrington
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor Mrs JM Young (in the Chair)
Councillor PP Young

Mr G Hudspeth, Responsible Financial Officer
Mr B Salisbury (Internal Auditor) (Part)

24. APOLOGIES FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Apologies for authorised absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs J Knox
Councillor RK Shukla

25. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

26. TO DETERMINE THE PARISH COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/2014 AND THE PARISH PRECEPT

The Council had regard to a letter dated 20 December 2013 that the Clerk had received from Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) Council's Senior Manager – Revenues and Benefits, Jerry Faulkner which informed that the money needed for the Parish's budgetary requirements was, through the Parish Council's power to precept, added to the Council Tax for its area.

Parish Council Tax was calculated by dividing the precept the Parish Council requested by the estimated 'Tax Base' for its administrative area. The number of 'Band D' equivalent properties in the Parish was calculated from information supplied by the Valuation Officer and then allowances were made for discounts, exemptions, non collections, etc. This meant that that if the Parish Band D equivalent properties were 200 and the Parish Council wanted to raise £1000 in precept, then this would add a £5:00 Parish Charge to each Band D property in the Parish. The Parish Charge for properties falling in another Band would then be adjusted accordingly.

The letter also reminded the Clerk that the national replacement of Council Tax Benefit with a new locally determined Council Tax Reduction Scheme

(CTRS) from the current 2013/14 Financial Year had potential to impact adversely on the parish precept and therefore, on local council tax changes to residents. In the spirit of localism and in order to mitigate this negative local impact CwaC had voluntarily decided to pass on some of its additional CTRS grant funding in 2013/14 to help parish councils to reduce their precepts. This new grant had helped to ensure that parish councils were not impacted financially by the introduction of CTRS.

CwaC had decided to maintain this new voluntary CTRS grant support to parish councils in 2014/15. It was important to note that the source of this funding was now part of CwaC's overall grant settlement from Central Government, which would be reduced again significantly for 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. In view of this, the amount of funding that CwaC had available to pass on had unfortunately also reduced by 9%

Taking account of the changes, Members were informed that the Tax Base for Saughall and Shotwick Park had been calculated as 1083 Band D equivalent properties and the Parish Council would receive a new Council Tax Reduction scheme grant of £5,490 from the Principal Authority which should be used to reduce the amount of the parish precept. Some Members were also of the view that the grant had been made available to enable the Parish Council to reduce the Parish precept. However, it was noted that grants could be changed and even withdrawn and that central government was progressively reducing grants to Principal Councils.

The Council was reminded that the Clerk had received a letter dated 28 November 2013 from the Leader of CwaC, Councillor Mike Jones advising that the Parish Council was eligible for a payment of New Homes Bonus grant from his Council's Community Fund to the value of £10,228 for the financial year 2013/14. This grant had now been received by the BACS.

Councillor Jones had gone on to inform that based on current Government policy the amounts which **may** be available for the Parish Council to claim in future years was expected to be in the region of the following amounts:

Financial Year	£
2014/15	10,228
2015/16	6,638
2016/17	6,638

Members referred to the following documents which were included with the agenda for the meeting:

- Draft Budget 2014/2015 (based on the budget for 2013/14)
- Parish Council Payments 1 April 2012 – 31 December 2013
- Precept Calculation 2013/14
- Estimated Expenditure to year-end 31 March 2014
- Estimated Income to year-end 31 March 2014
- Proposed Precept Calculation 2014/15 based on the tax base, provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council, of 1083

The Council reviewed its Draft Budget, gave consideration to each budget head in turn, had regard to its savings funds and revised those it considered necessary. The Council's aims were to determine the level of funding it required over the next year against each of its budget heads, to decide if any new budget heads needed to be added, removed or consolidated in order to carry out the Council's activities and provide an acceptable level of service both effectively and efficiently.

Before, finalising its budget Members gave consideration to what could be reduced or deleted from the draft budget for 2013/14. They also gave consideration to setting the level of the Parish precept for 2013/14 at an amount which enabled the Band D Council Tax to be retained at the current level of £54.98, along with a counter proposal to set a precept that allowed a reduction.

It was noted that the new Multi Use Games Area would have implications for the 2014/15 Budget. It was estimated that it would cost an extra £130 per annum to insure. It was estimated that it would cost £300 to clean (Pressure wash), £250 for sweeping, checking for broken glass, etc.

The Parish Council provided grants on an ad hoc basis to the Vernon Institute to improve its structure and fabric but it was the only organisation that did not pay for using its rooms for the meetings (14) it held there each year.

Members were asked to bear in mind when setting the 2014/15 Budget that that the trees behind the pond in the Golden Jubilee Park required some maintenance and this work would cost between £400 and £500. Also, the fencing required to keep animals out would cost £2,000 if put on the land owner's side and £4,000 if it was erected on the Parish Council's side of the ditch. A notice board in the Park was required and its cost was estimated to be in the region of £1,000.

At the Council's meeting on 6 January 2014 it had been agreed to ask the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide matched funding of £3,000 towards a flashing speed sign. The Council intended to contribute the remaining £3,000.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the £10,228 New Homes Bonus grant for Financial Year 2013/14 received from Cheshire West and Chester Council be placed in the Parish Council's Community Facilities Fund;
- (2) from the beginning of the 2014/15 Financial Year the Council will pay the appropriate booking fees when it holds its meetings in the Vernon Institute;
- (3) the funding for the notice board and the Council's contribution to the flashing speed sign be provided from the Community Action Projects Fund;
- (4) the Parish Council's budget for the Municipal Year 2013/14 be agreed as £69,717 as set out in Appendix A which allows the Band D Council Tax to be retained at the same level as that of 2012/13 ; and

(5) the Clerk be requested to inform Cheshire West and Chester Council that this Council requires a parish precept of £59,543 for the Municipal Year 2013/14 in accordance with the precept calculation set out in Appendix B.

27. VERNON INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (VIMC)

(a) Vernon Institute Building

Councillor PP Young informed that he had nothing new to report at the current time.

(b) Clock Automation

Councillor DF Holman informed that he was still not happy with the clock's lighting. Those who had carried out the work had been informed that the Council was not satisfied and wanted to see an improvement in the illumination before payment was made. (The cheque had not yet been handed over.)

The time regulation unit was to be fitted during the week. Once this work was completed the clock should keep perfect time.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor DF Holman's report be noted.

28. LODGE LANE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed that that there was no progress to report at the present time.

29. CHAIRMAN'S MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Mrs JM Young informed Members that, following the last meeting of the Council held on 6 January 2014 a private meeting had been arranged with the Inspector to discuss the incidents of anti-social behaviour being carried out in the Golden Jubilee Park. The meeting was scheduled for 6:45pm on Thursday, 23 January 2014 in the Uniformed Groups' Headquarters. They were all invited to attend along with those Identified at the last meeting.

Councillor Mrs JM Young also inform of various issues she had been involved in during the month. These included:

- People claiming they had no knowledge of the MUGA to be provided in the Golden Jubilee Park.
- Police visited for a briefing.
- Cones blocking a road on the Ridings Estate were reported to the Police.
- Enquiry regarding a mobile home on Church Road.
- Report of the PCSO walking away from a traffic problem on Church Road. She was on the way to the Red Ensign Garage and had not seen the problem.

- The Vicar asked for help with a Service. Councillor RA Storrar had subsequently assisted and read the Lesson.
- Mrs Bruce of Darlington Crescent had reported problems with youths.
- A faulty manhole outside 98 Hermitage Road.
- Finding an abandoned bike in a field.
- Telephone call about the attendees for the Police Forum.
- Police called about the MUGA.
- Problems regarding the new build on the site of the former Ridings Infant School. A meeting arranged for 10:30am on 16 January 2014 at Wain Court.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman be thanked for her informative report.

30. PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

(a) Surgery held on Saturday, 4 January 2014

Councillor DF Holman had presided over the Parish Council Surgery which had been held outside the Co-op Stores. Issues raised and discussed had included the following:

- Concern over inaction at K's Nursery: The site is subject to ongoing theft. A discussion was held over the potential future development and the difficulty of conversion to allotments.

PC Paul Taylor had since reported that he and PCSO Wendy Leason have met with the owners. Additional high fencing had been added to the main access point and the site had been regularly observed but no trespasses had been seen to date.

- Query over previously proposed "No Parking" signs along Long Lane grass verges.
- Concerns over MUGA development.
- Concerns over what appears to be increasing dog mess on pavements, verges and along the Green Way (Cycle Path).
- A general complaint about the noise pollution, air pollution, mess on roads and general disruption caused by Willow Hey and Lodge Lane developments.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor DF Holman be thanked for his very informative report.

(b) Surgery on Saturday, 1 February 2014.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs J Edwards be requested to preside over the next Parish Council Surgery to be held from 10 to 10:45am at the Co-op Stores.

Appendix A

Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council Budget 2014/2015

Budget Head	Budget 2014/2015
Environment Matters	
Drainage	1,000
Miscellaneous Minor Repairs	1,500
GJP - Field Fencing and Trees	2,500
Street Cleaning	1,250
Litter Bins	550
Grass Cutting (Golden Jubilee Park Recreational Area)	3,750
Play Equipment (rolling replacement programme)	5,000
Play Equipment Inspections (4No)	250
Map Boards and Footpath Leaflets	250
MUGA (maintenance)	300
Bulbs	100
Sub Total	16,450
Finance and General Purposes	
(a) Administration	
Principal Officer to the Parish Council (Salary)	11,250
Principal Officer to the Parish Council (Expenses)	100
Chairman's Allowance	1,000
Stationery/Postage/Computer Consumables	2,000
Parish Councillor's Expenses	100
Computer, Printer and Website Support	400
Newsletter publication costs	2,000
Training/Seminars	1,000
V Room Rental	500
Sub Total	18,350
(b) Annual Payments	
Audit Fees	450
Golden Jubilee Park Loan Repayment	1,888
Donations/Honorarium	250
Insurance	2,333
Subscriptions	925
V Clock Service	250
Village Events including Remembrance Sunday	250
Sub Total	6,346
(c) Community Facilities Fund	10,271
Police Community Support Officers	11,800
Neighbourhood Management Team including Summer Play Scheme	500
Uniform Groups' HQ Rental	500
Community Action Projects	1,000
War Memorial Fund/New Roll of Honour	1,500
Contingencies	3,000
Grand Total	69,717

**Saughall and Shotwick Park Parish Council
Draft Precept Calculation 2014/2015**

2013/2014

Budget	£76,900.00		
Precept	£58,398.00		
Council Tax (Band D)	£54.98		
		£	
	Estimated Income	127,413	
	Estimated Expenditure	-71,670	
	Surplus	<u>55,743</u>	55,743
Less money in Designated Funds			
	Community Facilities	17,256	
	Footpaths	851	
	Play Equipment	13,898	
	Community Safety/PCSO	0	
	ICT	1,000	
	Village Events	1,809	
	Community Action Projects	5,000	
	War Memorial Fund	3,500	
	Sports & Community Pavilion	7,750	
			<u>-51,064</u>
Balance Carried Forward			4,679

2014/2015

Budget	69,717
Less CW&C Council Tax Reduction Grant	-5,490
Less Other Income	
Powersystems Wayleave Payment	-5
Less Balance C/Fwd	<u>-4,679</u>
Required Precept	59,543
Tax Base (Band D)	1,083.0
Tax	<u>£54.98</u>
Increase/Decrease	0%