

# Chudleigh Town Council

# **Town Hall & Finance Committee**

# Monday 16 December 2019: 7.00pm:

## Election of Chair for meeting:

Councillor Evans agreed to take the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

## Public participation:

None

## In attendance:

Councillors Boston, Bennett, Castle, John Evans, Frost and Shaw. Also in attendance, the Clerk

## Apologies:

None.

## Declaration of members’ interests:

The Clerk issued a blanket dispensation to allow councillors to discuss the Town Council budget and the precept.

## Confirmation of Part 1 and 2 of the meeting:

The Chair advised that there would be no part two

## Urgent matters brought forward by the Chair:

None

## Review of action points from meeting of 24 September 2019.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| No | Action required | Outcome |
| 1 | Election of chair and Vice-Chair to be revisited at next committee meeting | Carried forward as **action point 1** |
| 2 | Undertake payment checks for period 1/8/19 – 30/9/19 | Completed by Councillor Bushell |
| 3 | October full council to be asked to agree expenditure for the resurfacing of Culver Green play park | Completed |
| 4 | October full council to be asked to ratify the section 137 grant awards proposed by the committee | Completed and paid |
| 5 | Recommendations from fire risk assessment to be actioned. | The works are in the process of being completed |
| 6 | Arrange for staircase to archive room to be cleaned | Completed |
| 7 | Those hirers storing equipment in the Woodway room to be asked to store it on the balcony | Completed |

## Consideration of draft budget for 2020/21:

The Clerk had circulated the draft budget to councillors in advance of the meeting. There was a lengthy discussion on various aspects of the budget. Councillor Frost expressed a desire to provide professional audio and lighting equipment in the Woodway Room. Her feeling was that it would cost around £20,000. It was felt that this was a wish list item for future years. Councillors Bennett and Castle spoke of the need to part fund some youth activities following the news that some existing funding would end at the end of the financial year. It was agreed to strip out the £4,000 set aside for work on the paved area at Colway Lane as the Taylor/Wimpey development was likely to impact on the area. However, the Clerk was asked to determine what action, if any, was needed to render the area safe. **(Action point 2)** It was also agreed to increase the funding for youth activities from £4,000 to £6,500. This left a total budget of income of £216,579 and expenditure of £220,243. Councillors considered that the level of reserves held made this manageable. Councillor Boston proposed the budget. This was seconded by Councillor Shaw before being unanimously agreed **(Action point 3)**

## Review of room hire, allotment and cemetery charges for 2020/21:

It was unanimously agreed to recommend a freeze on room hire and cemetery charges, maintaining them at the current level. Allotment charges would increase by £1 per plot as per normal practice. Proposed by Councillor Frost and seconded by Councillor Boston. **(Action point 4)**

## Consideration of staff salaries for 2020/21:

It was noted that the National Living Wage Foundation were recommending an increase from £9.00 to £9.30 per hour. Councillors unanimously agreed to recommend that the increase be implemented from 1/4/20. It was noted that there was no news from NALC regarding Clerk’s payscales for 20/21 but that a budget assumption had been made that there would be a 2% increase. Proposed by Councillor Castle and seconded by Councillor Boston. **(Action point 5)**

## Consideration of precept for 2020/21:

It was unanimously agreed that the committee would recommend to full council that there be no increase in precept and that a sum of £148,995 be levied. **(Action point 6)**

Councillor Boston left the meeting at this point

## Finance report:

1. The Clerk provided councillors with details of the current balances in the Council’s three bank accounts. See appendix 1.
2. Councillors were shown the aged debtors report. Councillors nted that the total balance was £1,997 with no single debtor owing more than £370.
3. The Clerk provided councillors with a budget variance report to 31/10/19. He advised that income and expenditure were both broadly on track.
4. The Clerk reported that two regular hirers were not returning in the new year. Neither was due to any dissatisfaction with the Town Hall but it equated to a loss of income of around £950.

## Consideration of interim audit report:

Councillors noted the report and the Clerk’s suggested actions. They were content that it should be passed to full council for ratification. **(Action point 7)**

## Approval of bank reconciliations and statements for the period 1 September to 30 November 2019.

The clerk answered questions about various payments on the bank statements before councillors unanimously agreed to approve them. Proposed by Councillor Shaw and seconded by Councillor Frost. **(Action point 8)**

## 2019 Health & Safety Review.

Councillors were provided with the report in advance of the meeting. They noted that no significant shortcomings had been identified. It was agreed that hirers should be informed of the identities of the first aid trained staff **(Action point 9)**

## Planning application 19/02324/FUL: 49 Palace Meaow, Chudleigh: Single storey side extension:

After brief discussion Councillor Evans proposed no objection. This was unanimously agreed. **(Action point 10)**

## Premises issues:

1. The Clerk advised that he would be seeking quotes in the new year for the external repairs identified in the structural survey report. He advised that the surveyor had confirmed that whilst remedial action was needed it was not urgent.
2. The doorframe on the external exit from the pre-school requires replacing. A quotation was being obtained.
3. An inspection by the Fire & Rescue Service had identified that two additional smoke detectors were required. The Clerk had asked the Council’s electrical contractor to action this.
4. The doorway to the archive room required repositioning so that the fuse box was situated within the room rather than in the corridor. This would negate the need to replace the fuse box with a metal version.

## Staff issues:

Nothing to report.

## Correspondence:

None.

Next meeting: Provisionally booked for 31 March. The Clerk was asked to seek an alternative date outside the Easter holiday period. **(Action point 11)**

Meeting closed 8.45pm

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| No | Action Point | By whom/when | Cleared |
| 1 | Election of chair and Vice-Chair to be revisited at next committee meeting | The Clerk |  |
| 2 | Consider what remedial work is needed on the Colway Lane paved area to make it safe | The Clerk |  |
| 3 | Submit revised draft budget to councillors for approval at January full council | The Clerk |  |
| 4 | Recommend to full council that room hire and cemetery charges be frozen in 2020/21 and allotment charges increase by £1 per plot in October 2020 | The Clerk |  |
| 5 | Proposed salary increases to be recommended to full council in January | The Clerk |  |
| 6 | Recommend to full council that there be no increase in precept and that a figure of £148,995 be levied | The Clerk |  |
| 7 | Full council to be asked to ratify the interim audit report | The Clerk |  |
| 8 | Full council to be asked to ratify bank statements & reconciliations for 1/9-30/11/19 period | The Clerk |  |
| 9 | Adviser hirers of names of trained first aiders on the staff | The Clerk |  |
| 10 | 19/02324/FUL: 49 Palace Meadow: Advise TDC that the Council has no objections | The Clerk |  |
| 11 | Arrange new date for next committee meeting | The Clerk |  |

Signed:

John Evans: Acting Chair: Town Hall & Finance Committee

Date: 6 January 2020

## Appendix 1 - Finance Report to Town Hall & Finance: 16 December 2019

Balances at 12 December 2019.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Current account | £15,300.72 |  |
| Deposit Account | £176,781.73 |  |
| Building maintenance account | £13,005.41 | It was agreed to set aside £6,500 per annum to build up a building maintenance fund. Its initial primary purpose is for the re-plastering of the Woodway Room. |

Ring-fenced funds included in the deposit account above:-

£123 from DCC for P3 grant (footpaths)

£895: The surplus in the Fore Street project fund.

£5,171.88 CIL funds (£465.06 received in October 2019)

£400 from County Councillor Brook for Sustrans consultancy

Total: £6,589.88

John Carlton

Town Clerk

12 December 2019