

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 10th January 2017 at the Community Office, Bruton at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Anderton, Brownlow, Hall, Hood, Jones, Marsh and Robinson
In the Chair: Councillor Hall
In attendance: The Clerk

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the F & GP Committee meeting held on 22nd November 2016

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2016 be adopted as a true and accurate record.

Resolution adopted 7-0-0

4. Financial Update

The Clerk presented details of the current financial position as at 31st December 2016. However, due to criticism of the format of the reporting, the Clerk was unable to complete her report on this occasion.

5. HR Sub Committee

A report was given by Councillor Hood. The Town Clerk's hours will be increased from 21 hours per week to 24 hours per week as from 1st April 2017. It was recommended that £3,000 be precepted for 2017/18 for additional staffing requirements to possibly include establishing a Town Ranger plan and also to obtain assistance with maintenance of the Town Council's website. It was resolved that the proposals put forward be recommended to full Council for approval. Discussion also took place regarding future handyman requirements. It was agreed that in future website items should be considered under the Communications Committee and the Town Ranger Plan by the Services and Amenities Committee.

6. County Fields

No further information has been received from SSC since their offer to transfer the land on a 50 year lease for £10,000. It was agreed that negotiations should proceed and discussion took place over how funding should be raised, either by precept or loan. It was resolved to recommend to full Council that £2,500 be added to the precept for 2017/2018.

7. Town Trust

Although at present the Town Council does not entirely own any buildings, discussion took place to consider the setting up of a Trust to potentially take control of buildings in the town. It was noted that information is available from various organisations and training can be organised. There will be costs involved to register and set up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with an estimate of £3,000 given. The Community Council for Somerset will be approached for help. The possible asset transfer of the Dovecote Building was discussed but no report has been forthcoming from SSDC.

8. Draft Precept

Councillor Robinson presented the draft precept for 2017/2018, with adjustments made to reflect proposals put forward at tonight's meeting. The Responsible Financial Officer noted that the percentage increase now proposed could possibly be considered excessive. The final draft will be presented for approval at the full Council meeting on 24th January 2018.

Members of Council considered these matters in the exercise of their functions: Equal opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability): Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.