

Minutes of the proceedings of Finance and General Purpose Committee held on Monday 16 November 2009 at 7.30pm at Knightwood Leisure Centre Valley Park

Present: Councillor A Dowden (Chairman) and Councillors C Anderson (Vice Chairman), J Barton, G Compton and Mrs A Dowden.

Action

1 Appointment of Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor A Dowden be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor C Anderson be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Council year.

3 Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4 Budget 2010/2011

The Committee considered the budget for 2010/2011. The total amount which needed to be raised for 2010/2011 was £64,250. However, having regard to the level of balances which was necessary for next year Committee considered that it would be prudent to raise just £45,000 which would leave the Parish Council element of the Council Tax the same as last year.

Recommended:

That the budget as set out in the annex to these minutes be adopted and that a Council Tax Precept of £45,000 be raised for 2010/2011.

5 2008/2009 National Salary Award For Local Council Clerks

The Clerk advised the Committee that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had reached an interim agreement on rates of pay as from 1 April 2009 (an increase of 1%). Consequently the National Association of Local Council Clerks and the Society of Local Council Clerks had jointly recommended that the salary scales of Local Clerks be increased by 1%.

Recommended:

That the Clerks remuneration package be increased by 1% and back dated to 1 April 2009.

Clerk

6 Financial Regulations

The Committee received draft financial regulations which the Clerk had put forward for adoption.

Recommended:

That the Financial Regulations as set out in Paper A, attached to the agenda, be adopted.

7 Risk Management Review

Consideration was given to a report of the Clerk dealing with a risk management policy and a review of key risks which the Council could face.

The Local Councils Governance and Accountability Guidance made the following observations regarding risk management:

1. Risk management is not only about financial management, it is concerned with setting objectives and achieving them in order to deliver high quality public services.
2. The approach places emphasis on local councils strengthening their own corporate governance arrangements, improving their stewardship of public funds and providing assurance to tax payers.

It goes on to make the point that Members are ultimately responsible for risk management because risk threatens the achievement of policy objectives. Members should, therefore:

- a. undertake steps to identify key risks facing the Council;
- b. evaluate the potential consequences to the Council if an event identified as a risk takes place;
- c. decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

To identify the risks facing a council, the guidance recommended beginning by grouping the three main types of decisions that have to be taken into the following areas:

- i. Areas where there may be scope to use insurance to help manage risk;
- ii. Areas where there may be scope to work with others to help manage risk;
- iii. Areas where there may be need for self-managed risk.

The Committee therefore reviewed its risks under a number of headings as identified in Paper B attached to the report and concluded that there were no additional risks to address this year.

Recommended:

- (1) That the Risk Management Policy, as submitted, be approved.**
- (2) That having reviewed the risks for 2009/2010 no additional risks have been identified.**

8 Review of Council Insurances

The Clerk reported on the Council's current insurance with Zurich. The Committee reviewed the level of that insurance and the adequacy of its insurance for the coming year.

Recommended:

That no change be made to the Council insurance for the coming year.

9 Internal audit Review 2009

Consideration was given to a report of the Clerk dealing with a review of its internal audit. The report proposed terms of reference for the audit and set out proposals on how the audit work should be carried out having regard to the objectives set out in section 4 of the Local Authorities Annual Return.

Action

Section 4 of the report set out a proposed internal audit plan which would be reviewed on an annual basis.

Whilst considering the annual internal audit plan, the Council was mindful of the Internal Audit Review checklist and Characteristics of Effectiveness outlined in the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils and also set out in the report.

Recommended

- 1. That the scope and terms of reference of internal audit as set out in the report be approved.**
- 2. That having carried out a review of audit planning and being mindful of the scope and terms of reference approved in (1) above the internal audit plan for the current year be based upon the internal audit report as attached in appendix 1 to the report.**

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Valley Park Parish Council Budget	
Expenditure Heading	2010/2011
	£
Clerks Salary, Allowance and on costs	13,000
Summer Baskets (Valley Park in Bloom)	7,600
Winter troughs etc	500
Watering	5,500
Strimming costs	400
Allotments	5,000
Maintenance of Speed limiters	1,600
Grants to other organisations	4,000
Meeting Room costs	1,000
Election expenses (this will build up reserves to pay for next parish election)	2,000
Parish Partnership: New Footway	7,500
Accountants Fees	1,500
Zurich Insurance	1,200
New Bus Shelter	10,000
Security Patrols	2,000
News letter	1,000
Web Hosting	300
Membership of Society of Local Council Clerks	150
TOTAL	64,250
Income	
VAT reimbursements	2,000
Interest on Deposit Account	20
From Balances	17,230
Balance to Raise	45,000