

BEER PARISH COUNCIL

Financial & General Purposes Committee.

Minutes of Annual Precept Meeting held Tuesday 15 December 2020 at 7pm via Zoom

Present:

Geoff Pook (Chair), Darren Clinch, Rick Dormor
Annie Dallaway (Clerk)

- 1] **Apologies:** Andy Cobbold (accident), Louise Vine (maternity leave)
- 2] It was agreed that item 5 below be dealt with after the press and public have been excluded.
- 3] All members declared an interest in agenda item 6. However, a universal dispensation has been granted to all Councillors for the duration of the Council, to enable them to participate and vote in relation to precept planning matters (Full Council resolution 3 November 2020).

4] **Review of fee income for 2021/22:**

4.1 The Meadows parking bays - Terms and Conditions and permit fees

The Committee recommended a 5% increase to £320.25 incl VAT for 2021/22

4.2 Townsend Coach & Car Park - Terms and Conditions and permit fees

The Committee recommended a 10% increase to bring the fee more in line with The Meadows (consistent with last year's rise): Cars £302.50 incl VAT; Coaches & Commercial £350.89 incl VAT for 2021/22

4.3 Heritage Centre rent

The Committee recommended a 2% increase to £333

4.4 Sea View Terrace lease fee

The Committee recommended the lease fee be increased to match The Meadows parking fee as the leased land is used as a parking bay £266.87 (no VAT charged)

4.5 Charging schedule for events

The Committee recommended that this matter be delegated to the CCT Committee to review and make recommendations to Full Council as appropriate and with due consideration to Covid restrictions and government guidance in place during 2021.

4.6 Kayak storage

The Parish Council is keen to introduce a charge for storage for the 2021 season. However, EDDC has indicated that kayaks stored on the beach will also potentially require an EDDC licence. Cllr Pook will negotiate with EDDC and feedback to Full Council in January. **ACTION: CLLR POOK**

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public (including the press) were excluded from the meeting at this point due to the confidential nature of the agenda items to be discussed (agenda item 5). The Clerk left the remote meeting for agenda item 5.3

5] **General Personnel issues review.**

Pay & conditions (pension)

The Committee commended the Clerk and the Workman for their excellent performance over the year, and will bring it to the attention of the Full Council. The Committee reviewed the pay scales and made the following recommendations:

5.1 Kevin Hale, Workman

The Workman is currently at SCP 5, in line with EDDC Street Scene operatives.

The Committee recommends no increase in scale point for the Workman for 2021/22 but endorses an inflation increase in line with NJC recommendations (2% for the purposes of 2021/22 budget).

A NEST pension is successfully operating for the Workman.

5.2 Event Coordinator role

The terms of employment for Kayleigh Westlake were 5 hours a week until 31 March 2021. The CCT Committee will review future requirements for the role and make recommendations to Full Council with due consideration to Covid restrictions and government guidance in place during 2021.

The Event Coordinator has been offered the opportunity to take part in the NEST pension scheme.

The Clerk left the meeting for this part of the agenda item.

5.3 Annie Dallaway, Parish Clerk

The Clerk is currently at SCP 20.

The Clerk has written a proposal for additional hours – see Appendix A to the minutes, which includes a full breakdown of additional hours worked from September to December (34.5 additional hours without pay). The Clerk maintains that she cannot fulfil the responsibilities of the role of Clerk and Financial Officer within the allocated hours of 8.75 per week. There has been no increase in hours since 2012.

The Committee recommends no increase in scale point for the Parish Clerk for 2021/22 but endorses an inflation increase in line with NJC recommendations (2% for the purposes of 2021/22 budget). The Committee recommends an increase in hours to 12 per week to fulfil the responsibilities of the post, from 1 April 2021. The Committee further recommends that the Clerk be able to claim overtime payments on a monthly basis for Jan – March 2021.

The Clerk has declined to take part in the NEST pension scheme but will ensure the Council meets its obligations regarding the Pensions legislation.

5.4 Employment Contract

As the Employment Contract was only introduced in January 2020, the Committee agreed to review formally in December 2021.

6] Review budget 20/21 and draft budget for 21/22 and make recommendation for Precept for 21/22 (based on draft budget circulated)

Review budget 20/21

The Committee reviewed income and expenditure to date in line with the budget forecast for 2020/21 and identified no areas of concern. The Committee noted the new Alpha software annual budget reports.

Review draft budget for 21/22

The Committee reviewed the draft budget for 2021/22 and considered the recommendations below:

6.1 Consider recommendations for expenditure from Portfolio groups

No specific recommendations received

6.2 Consider quotes for new website to meet Government guidance re accessibility

The Council's website does not currently meet the accessibility criteria – as an interim measure, an Accessibility Statement is available on the website detailing which sections of the website are not compliant.

The Committee recommended that £1k be allocated in the budget for a new website compliant with the accessibility criteria.

The Committee recommended the draft budget for 2021/22 for approval at the Parish Council meeting in January 2021 to include an increase in the precept figure for 2021/22 in order to enable the Council to provide a balanced budget with sufficient allocation for employment costs - £24,129 precept. The effect on a Band D property would be £36.28.

The Clerk will present a revised draft budget to Full Council in January including the recommendations from Finance Committee – once the recommendations are approved, the revised budget will stand approved.

7] Standing Orders/Financial Regulations review.

The Committee reviewed recommendations from the Internal Audit Report 2019/20:

In order to comply with the HMRC regulations for PAYE the Council has introduced bank automated monthly payments for salaries (rather than standing orders) in order that the amount can be varied to agree with the payslip.

7.1 To consider adoption of Model Financial Regulations

The Internal Audit Report of 2018/19 had recommended the adoption of NALC Model Financial Regulations. The Clerk is keen for the Council to formally consider this and adopt for the 2021/22 financial year. This will be a Full Council agenda item in the New Year.

The Committee recommended no changes to the existing governing documents but agreed to formally consider the adoption of the NALC Model Financial Regulations for the 2021/22 financial year.

8] Risk Management Review.

8.1 Review Business Risk Management document

The Committee reviewed the Business Risk Management document and recommended that the document be updated to reflect the use of the new Alpha software and the updated arrangements for authorising the monthly salary payments.

8.2 Review Asset Risk Management document

The Committee reviewed the existing Asset Risk Management document and recommended the following amendments:

- i) Defibrillator – to be included as low likelihood but high risk**
- ii) Kayak storage – to be included as low likelihood and low risk**

9] General Data Protection Review.

The Committee is satisfied that the Council's arrangements comply with the legislation which came into effect in May 2018. The Parish Council's Privacy Notice is available on the Parish Council website.