

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING – 2016/11/21 – 04

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 21 November 2016 at 6.02 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs B Pearman (Chairman), B Berryman, D Biddle, J Greenwood, C Harris, H Ives and A Preest

Mrs J Smailes – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/RFO
Miss C Wheeler – Executive Officer (EO)

Cllr Pearman informed all present that no practice fire evacuation had been scheduled for the duration of the meeting. All attendees were then informed of the locations of the nearest fire exits.

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **OPEN FORUM**

No requests to speak were received.

4. **FINANCIAL**

Committee Budget – 2017/18

Members were provided with a copy of the draft Committee Budget for 2017/2018, which amounted to £60,680.00, for their consideration. Attention was drawn to the fact that the “Free Grants” budget was shown at £5,000 and Members were advised that should the overall budget be within an acceptable parameter then this sum would be increased to £10,000.00. Should additional grants be required the sum may then be applied for via Full Council from General Reserves.

Noting the cost incurred to collect litter on the Council’s land, Cllr Greenwood felt that greater publicity should be placed on the problem. Cllr Pearman suggested that the matter may be a future agenda item for Amenities Committee consideration. Members were informed that the CEO was currently formulating a document which would clearly set out the Council’s spending plan for 2017/2018 and it was felt that the cost of litter collection could be included within said document.

It was **proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Berryman**, that the proposed Committee budget for 2017/2018 of £60,680.00 (£65,680.00 dependent upon overall budget) would be approved. Unanimous.

Full Council Budget/Precept Recommendation

Members were informed that Forest of Dean District Council’s S151 Officer would provide the Band D calculations to the CEO on 9 December 2016, therefore it would not be possible to consider the Full Council Draft Budget/derive a Precept Recommendation therefrom until this information had been received.

It was noted that a letter had been received from Mr Mark Harper MP concerning the withdrawal of the Local Council Tax Support Grant and it was noted that the letter would be

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an item of correspondence at Full Council.

During discussion it was noted that the CEO would be attending a meeting between the Forest Town Clerks and Officers from Forest of Dean District Council later in the week; the CEO committed to provide a report on the meeting at the next Full Council meeting.

Consideration was then given as to when the Committee would consider the Full Council Draft Budget/derive a Precept Recommendation therefrom. After a further short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Greenwood**, that an Extra Ordinary Finance and Scrutiny Committee meeting would be convened at 5.00 pm on 12 December 2016 in order that the Committee's Budget Recommendation and Precept Recommendation could be considered by Full Council later that same evening; should it not be possible to provide the Committee with the Band D calculations for consideration at the Finance & Scrutiny Committee meeting, Full Council would consider its Budget and derive the Precept figure therefrom at its January Full Council meeting. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

5. GOVERNING DOCUMENTATION

Members were provided with a copy of the Town Council's current Code of Conduct document and also a copy of the CPALC Communities Parishes and Local Council's guidance sheet pertaining to a "Code of Conduct" for Parish and Town Councils.

During discussion Members noted that the Localism Act 2012 had removed the power of a Principal Authority to sanction Town and Parish Councillors. Members considered if they wished to amend Lydney Town Council's current policy in order that the Council itself could be afforded the ability to place sanctions on any Member who was found to have breached the Code. Members felt that it would be the responsibility of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee to consider any sanctions which may be imposed as a result of a confirmed breach of the Code (e.g. removal from a Committee).

After a short further discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Pearman** that the CEO would be requested to draft a revised Code of Conduct in line with discussion/CPALC Communities Parishes and Local Council's guidance sheet; that Full Council would be asked to approve the revised Code of Conduct at its December meeting. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Members noted that Standing Orders would also need to be amended in order to reflect the proposed change to the Code of Conduct as would the Council's Complaints Procedure.

6. MEETING DATES

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee would take place on 29 February 2017 (Grant Applications).

7. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of today's meeting was **proposed by Cllr Ives, seconded by Cllr Harris**. Unanimous. Cllr Pearman then signed the minutes as a true record.

Meeting closed at 6.47 pm.

Chairman 

Date 21/11/16