

NOTES FROM MEETING OF THE BUDGET WG HELD ON FRIDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 10.00 HELD AT THE COSTESSEY CENTRE, LONGWATER LANE, COSTESSEY

Present: Cllrs J Amis, D Burrill, S Hannant, G Jones, P O'Connor. H Elias (Town Clerk), N Bailey (Deputy Clerk) & L Trabucco (Minutes Secretary)

Apologies: Cllr G Blundell

Noted that a chairman was nominated as Cllr D. Burrill

Purpose: Budget 2022/23 - run a reduced deficit budget

Discussion:

- Initial inclination to go with scenario 1: reduction of 50% of current year deficit and roughly in line with inflation (5.05% increase)
- Produce figures that might come up next year
- Consider salaries - increased costs due to new staff:
- Play equipment might not be necessary as in 2021-22 £113K had been committed.
- For 2022-23 budget Cllrs to look carefully when any project suggestions arising during CTC meetings
- Audio/visual spent committed in 2021 for at least £13K - might run through into 2023
- Newsletter budgeted for a quarterly publication. 8 – 12 pages might be more cost efficient across 3 issues, rather than 4; Add annual report on 2 sides and make newsletter available online
- Timing of press release of budget / new Band D rate in the Newsletter
- Council Tax article in Newsletter should show inflation for BAND D rate - starting with 2007 rate when it was last increased projected up to now as not increased in line with inflation over the years
- Not many options to cut budget spending - Try to cut back on non-essentials
- Show option of a balanced budget (eg. £131.88 raise of £10.98 a year)
- Run straight 5% option rather than scenario 1 for comparison figures
- Prepare a timesheet with projects and ideas for Future Finances WG as timescale often short for procuring grants
- A formal process for Cllrs to bring up projects, suggestions and ideas should be considered
- Full council to consider the "Post Office" idea to investigate further
- A proposal for the CTC agenda item - investigate in the fees of the operational and "provisional establishment"
- Look at where the reserve should ideally be and where it is likely to be

ACTIONS:

Clerk to prepare report and figures showing 5% increase with new Tax Base for 2022-23, to be presented to full Council on 14 December as a preliminary discussion

Option for Balanced Budget to be outlined

Band D Rate from 2007 to be run through Bank of England inflation Tracker to show what it would be for 2022-23

Final decision on budget and Precept to be made in January full Council meeting

Meeting ended at 11:15am