

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes

A meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee was held by Zoom conference at 19:30 on **Monday 11 January 2021**.

Present: Cllrs Eric Buckmaster (Chair), Angela Alder, Ruth Buckmaster, Annelise Furnace, David Royle, Greg Rattey [Ex-Officio]

Absent: None

In Attendance: Mr Simon Crocker – Town Clerk. There were no members of the public present.

F 20/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence

There were no apologies

F 20/25 PUBLIC FORUM

To respond to questions from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Finance and Policy Committee.

There were no members of the public present

F 20/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To consider any Declarations of Interest by Members

Cllrs noted that they were members of various external organisations as set out below:

- Hailey Centre: Cllrs E Buckmaster, Alder, Rattey
- SYPRC: Cllrs R Buckmaster, Furnace, Royle, Alder
- RHSO: Cllrs R Buckmaster, E Buckmaster
- Town Twinning: Cllrs Royle, E Buckmaster

F 20/27 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 14 September 2020

It was:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Policy meeting held on 14th September 2020 be approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chair. *Proposed by Cllr Alder, seconded by Cllr Ruth Buckmaster – All in favour.*

F 20/28 BUDGET 2021/2022

To consider a draft budget for the forthcoming financial year

A draft estimate of expenditure and income for financial year 2021-2022 was considered page by page. Members made the following observations / recommendations. The Chair explained that salary elements were recharged across various service centres.

Pg1:

- 2% salary increase assumed.

Pg2:

- Two separate codes for website to delineate between annual costs and development budget.
- £500 Tourism budget – for advertising events.

Pg3:

- New homes bonus budget of 0 but likely to get something. Amount unknown at present.
- Due to pandemic, unknown whether/if civic events will happen.
- Code 4340 - (Twinning hospitality) now defunct, line to be deleted.

Pg4:

- No Comments

Pg5:

- Code 4420 - £2000 toward external fabric of Hailey Centre.
- Code 4400 – Rental costs for storage of plant and equipment.

Pg6:

- No Comments.

Pg7:

- Allotment costs. Varies by size of site.

Pg8:

- No Comments.

Pg9:

- Burials net income estimated at £10,000.
- Code 4700 – Town Council pays for Orchard mowing.

Pg10:

- No Comments

Pg11:

- Code 4601 – Bell St W/C's annual maintenance cost of £10,000.
- Noted that events may not be held at usual times due to Pandemic.

Pg12:

- No Comments.

Pg13:

- Code 4685 – Christmas lights cost of £15,000. Need to tender and engage with stallholders noted.
- Centre 630 – Markets are Covid dependant.
- Code 4720 – Town green project likely to span more than one year.
- Code 4730 – (Defibrillator) code now defunct, line to be deleted.
- Code 4705 – (WWI / VE day) Code now defunct, line to be deleted.

Pg14:

- No Comments.

Pg15:

- Code 1150 – (Sawbobus grant) reduced by 50% in preparation for phasing out. To be funded by precept in future.
- Code 4029 – (Salary Recharge) budget reduced to reflect reduced staff hours during pandemic.
- Code 1850 – (Vehicle Hire Income) budget of 0 but some income may be generated, Covid dependant.

Pg16:

- No Comments.

Pg17:

- Code 4915 – (Town Welcome Pack) unknown when this will take place, code to stay.
- Noted predicted movement of £32,165 to reserves.

Pg18:

- Noted predicted closing reserves equal to 27% of suggested precept.
- Noted suggested precept of £361,628. Equal to a Band D equivalent of £96.17, representing a 6.6% increase.
- ACTION – Change tax base to reflect actual (3760.29)

Cllr Alder requested the minutes record the Committee's thanks for the work put into the production of the draft budget by the Committee Chair and the former Town Clerk.

It was:

RESOLVED that the Committee recommend the draft budget, and a precept of £361,628.00, to Full Council.

*Proposed by **Cllr Ruth Buckmaster**, seconded by **Cllr Alder** – All in favour.*

F 20/29 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

To consider any items for inclusion on future agendas.

- Investment Strategy Report.
- Comms Policy.
- Bank Mandates and Signatories review.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:36