

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **extraordinary** meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** held on Tuesday 1st December 2015 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Office, The Library, Church Street, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Brookman, Crane, Small, Benneyworth and Farrell

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Bumbieris for being late.
2. **Declarations of interest** – Cllr Farrell has an interest in Croft Field (item 6)
3. **Minutes – Propose minutes of F&GP meeting on 10th November 2015.** Cllr Small proposed minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.
4. **Finance**
 - a. **Update on VAT Partial Exemption Position.** The application to become VAT registered from 1/12/15 has gone off. To date no response back has been received.
 - b. **Consider cost implications to employ an extra member of office staff.** A staff meeting took place. Staff are experiencing an increase in work load from WBC and more public coming in the office. They are requesting an additional member of staff is employed for a permanent part time role. It has been costed at a lowest figure of £6,373 annually. The cost to this year's budget from 1st January would be £2,100 Cllr Crane proposed an assistant to do 16 hours a week is sought to start from 1st Jan the earliest, all in favour.
 - c. **Discuss and propose F&GP budget.** Details were requested on how the Hungerford & Camborne grant was spent. **Action:** - Request from S Breadmore. **Action:** Ask Marc Allen for free inspection of Swimming Pool House. Increases to the budget suggested include: Staff training for Clerk for Quality Award, and Civic expenses to include flags/entertainment/events. Meeting in Croft Field Activity Centre for committee meetings to save room hire costs was considered. It was decided to look at this once the North Building is usable. Hire costs for the Croft Field Centre are yet to be reviewed and will be following VAT registration.
 - d. **Consider budgets proposed by each committee. Discuss and recommend to Full Council, Budget and Precept totals for 2016-17.** There is likely to be an increase in precept. The main factors are business rates, extra member of staff, WBC grant decreasing and WCB cuts resulting in HTC paying for salt bins. There could also be costs incurred for CCTV and the buses.
 - e. **Agree consultation response to WBC Budget Proposals for 2016/17. (considering proposed cuts involving Chestnut Walk Care Home, Transport, CCTV, salt bins etc.)** It was agreed to take £2k out of the budget for LDF as have £2k is already earmarked.

CCTV – WBC are withdrawing funding from April. If HTC don't fund it others that do will have to absorb the monitoring cost. End date of the WBC Cuts consultation is 14/12/15 but results aren't available until 18/3/16.

Buses – WBC are threatening cuts to the buses. H1 is already financially supported by HTC. No 90 Lambourn is likely to be withdrawn within next 12 months. No 3 is likely to be severely affected. At present we have no request from WBC to support these bus routes further financially.

Cllr Bumbieris proposed delete from budget, new benches £500 as we have £2K for bench repair, delete extra reserves for skate park as there is no vision to complete a project and delete car park extra repairs. Instead £5011.42 of S106 money will be allocated to car park repairs, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

Cllr Brookman proposed reducing new equip for Christmas lights to £1000. Tree income to remain the same. Cllr Bumbieris proposed to present 2 options to Full Council: Option 1 (with CCTV) – increase 19%. Option 2 (without CCTV) – increase 7.55%. All agreed. Cllr Benneyworth left.

Bus routes shouldn't be cut. The H1 was agreed by WBC to be funded until 2018/19. As a rural service centre we should be serving surrounding villages. **Action:** Consider neighbouring parishes' concerns. **Action:** Cllr Crane to email Peter Argyll to request extension to consultation response. HTC has agreed to fund the Salt bins. The Care Home - Could it be run as an independent charity?

5. **T&M Lease – Update on Football Club and T&M agreement.** Cllrs Benneyworth and Crane and Clerk met with solicitor. **Action:** Email Michaela's report to everyone to read.
6. **Croft Field - Propose quote to repair leak.** All agreed to pay £200 to source leak.

Meeting closed at 9.25pm