

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council
Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting
held on 20 November 2023 at 7:30pm

1 PRESENT:

Mr S Snelling
Mr S Court
Mr J Emsell
Mr J Ward

Mr F Bowe
Ms L Barrett
Mrs L Skinner
Mr P Berry

APOLOGIES: None

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs M Barron (CEO), Mrs R McCarthy (OM/RFO), Mrs L Weston (Administration and Committee Officer), Cllr J Fisher and one member of public.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Snelling declared an interest in item 7 on the agenda.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (LIMITED TO 3 MINS PER SPEAKER)

In regard to item 6 on the agenda, a member of the public raised concern with the Tennis Court Maintenance line for 24/25. Having previously raised the condition of the courts with the Town Council and, after researching costs with the Lawn Tennis Association, it was strongly felt that the amount is insufficient. The Council was requested to consider adjusting this line.

On behalf of the children who regularly use the courts for skateboarding, the same member of public asked the Council to expediate the building of the skatepark, for the community.

5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES PAY AGREEMENT 2023/2024

The RFO gave some explanations to the paper, effective from 1st April 2023 and further information to support proposals for staff.

Cllr Snelling proposed that all staff move to the new pay rates, in line with the pay agreement, back dated to 1 April 2023. It was RESOLVED with a show of hands, all in favour.

Cllr Snelling proposed that one member of administration staff move up a scale point from 9 to 10, as from the date of this proposal. It was RESOLVED with a show of

hands, all in favour.

Cllr Snelling proposed that one member of the Parks team move up a scale point from 7 to 8, as from the date of this proposal. It was RESOLVED with a show of hands, all in favour.

6 BUDGET 2024/25

The RFO presented version 3 of the Budget for 2024/25 to the Committee, post version 2 going to Full Council and amendments made in response to that meeting. Version 3 is updated to reflect forecasted Fireworks and Remembrance costs, and explanation given for keeping the predicted Fireworks receipts at £15K. Version 3 has a precept required of £609120, with a Tax Base of 5189, giving an increase of 10.6%, equal to an extra 0.94p a month per household.

Cllr Ward reiterated his previous statement; that the Council shouldn't go above a 5% increase, keeping in line with NCC and BDC. Also, to wait for the Pinebanks monies to fund future projects.

Cllr Snelling and Cllr Bowe both reminded the Committee of the length of time the residents have been waiting for the Pinebanks funds and that there is no reason to believe it will appear anytime soon. The Council needs to go some way to improve the community facilities for residents.

Cllr Fisher attended the meeting to bring attention to the cemetery budget and a request to retain the previously agreed £2,000 budget. Cllr Fisher briefed the Committee on the burial sites and the historical agreement of the £2,000.

The CEO reminded the Committee that the cemetery budget is set according to the more recent agreement made and it cannot be increased without agreement from the Town Council. Also, the cemetery budget line 24/25 has moved to S137 in the budget, as the correct place to show it.

Cllr Ward requested that the cemetery budget is included on the Town Council Agenda for Jan/Feb 24, for a decision on the budget allocated.

Cllr Emsell suggested a reduction of £1,000 to the events line.

The RFO suggested removing the St Georges Day event budget, replacing it with a nil cost event.

Taking all the discussions into consideration, the RFO amended version 3 of the budget by the following: Events was reduced by £2,000, Youth Council reduced to nil and Projects reduced by £250.

It was proposed by Cllr Snelling and seconded by Cllr Emsell to reduce expenditure by the above, reducing the precept required to £605870, on a Tax Base of 5189, resulting in an increase of 10%, £0.89p a month per household; with a show of hands with one against it was **RESOLVED** to take to Full Council.

7 DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP ACCOUNTS YTD - Noted

Cllr Snelling gave an overview of the accounts, to be brought to the Committee regularly in future, as good practice.

Cllr Ward offered thanks to Cllr Snelling and the team of volunteers on behalf of the Council.

Further Agenda Items (Not for Discussion)

None

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed:

Dated:

