

Pool-in-Wharfedale Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Pool-in-Wharfedale Parish Council Finance Committee held at The Methodist Rooms, Manor Gardens, Pool in Wharfedale on Monday 8th January 2018 at 6.30pm.

Present: Councillor Morris in the Chair and Cllrs Bearpark, Mifsud, Rowling and Lee.

In attendance: Parish Clerk J.Ryan

FC2018/231 Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

FC2018/232 To accept apologies for absence.

No apologies for absence received.

FC2018/233 To receive any declarations of personal and prejudicial interests in items on the agenda.

The clerk asked councillors to note that DCLG guidance in relation to dispensations allowed them to participate in council business connected with council tax. "Any payment of, or liability to pay, council tax does not create a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined in the national rules; hence being a council tax payer does not mean that you need a dispensation to take part in the business of setting the council tax or precept or local arrangements for council tax support".

No declarations of interest were recorded.

FC2018/234 To approve the minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 13th November 2017.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13th November 2017 were approved by Finance Committee proposed by Councillor Bearpark and seconded by Councillor Morris.

FC2018/235 To receive information arising from the minutes that is not listed elsewhere on the agenda.

None.

FC2018/236 Budget for 2018/18, Level of Precept for 2018/19 and to review the Council's Five Year Financial Strategy.

The Chairman Councillor Morris outlined the updated Council Five Year Financial Strategy and highlighted the following achievements :

- Set aside a significant portion of its cash balances to create a Special Projects Reserve
- Established and maintained the principle that general reserves should be held to the value of 50% of annual expenditure
- Adopted a cross-years approach to budgeting for the Wharfedale Greenway Project and the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- Regulated the Council's financial and service relationship with the RGMC
- Made no increase in the level of precept
- Pursued grant funding where available, most notably in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan.

The strategy Document also asked council to consider increasing the precept, recognising the additional revenue generated would be modest. The current level of precept has been held for the last four years in keeping with the financial climate of austerity measures and council tax freezes. It was felt that the

time to raise the level has come due to rising inflation and wage restraint policies being lifted. A rise in Precept would better protect the council's financial base and help in meeting priorities such as the council's playground which needs constant funds for everyday maintenance and refurbishment. It may also help to increase the funds available for new equipment and to improve playground surfaces.

The Committee also discussed the latest financial implications for the Council of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed to have this debate at the full council meeting as the possible call on finances might be significant.

The Committee agreed by resolution proposed by Councillor Rowling and seconded by Councillor Bearpark to propose a 5% increase in the Precept. This recommendation approved would be out to the following council meeting under the Budget Agenda item.

Further work will commence, if the recommendation is approved by council, on the budget for 2018/19 and be brought back for approval to the next finance committee meeting to be held in February 2018.

FC2018/237 **To agree items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting.**
2018/19 Budget Forecast

FC2018/238 **Date and time of next meeting.**
Monday 12th February 2018 at the Methodist Rooms, Manor Gardens, Pool commencing at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed at 7.25pm.