

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE ON MONDAY 13 DECEMBER 2021, AT 7.30 P.M.

Councillors present: Councillor Major J Sibbald (Town Mayor)
Councillors A Crawford, A Dunford, E L Johnson,
J E Nunn-Price (part), P O'Leary, S Third and
C Wills-Wright.

Others present:

Clerk: W P Falkenau.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I R Cameron, A Duveen, T Gilhome, J T Hannaby, A Menzies, A Przybysz, I L Sheldon and C Walters. Councillor Nunn-Price had given her apology for late arrival.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

None.

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 November 2021

The minutes were approved and signed.

66. Lease for a garage to the rear of 44 Market Placet

The Clerk reported that the lease had a clause requiring the Council to reimburse insurance costs. The charge was estimated at £600. Members felt this charge was excessive. The Clerk agreed to go back to the landlord and seek a lower charge. **Action: Clerk**

70. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

71. Financial Statements to November 2021.

The statements were noted. The Clerk commented on income and expenditure and areas where there were variances from budgets. A surplus of £178k to November was reported. He advised that some expenditure had been delayed, or would not proceed, due to the pandemic. The surplus would decrease over the coming months as payments were made. On the balance sheet there were cash balances of £783k. The bank reconciliation was noted. There were still deposits of £85k to be placed with building societies, as previously agreed. The application processes were taking some time to progress. The Clerk did not have current statements for deposits with Nationwide and Bath Building Society. Once these were available, the Town Mayor would initial the bank reconciliation to confirm that it had been presented to the Council. **Action: Sibbald**

72. To confirm the Town Mayor's allowance for 2022/23.

It was agreed that the Town Mayor's allowance be set at £2,975 for the year 2022/23. The Town Mayor advised that this was currently a reasonable reflection of expenses incurred but that this could change, dependent upon the circumstances of each mayor. It was agreed that mayors should not be expected to fund expenses arising from the role and that the allowance could be reviewed at any time, if necessary.

73. To consider budgets and setting of precept for 2022/23.

Estimates worksheets had been prepared by the Clerk following input from committees. The Clerk commented on the statements.

Councillor Nunn-Price arrived.

The parish tax base was estimated by the District Council to increase by 4% in 2022/23. This created the possible options of either increasing the precept by this percentage to leave the council tax per household unchanged or leaving the precept unchanged from 2021/22 and thereby reducing the council tax per household, relating to the Town Council, by this percentage.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED by Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED that a precept of £355,000 be set for 2022/23.

It was agreed that the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) be referred to a future meeting of the Policy, Management and Finance Committee. **Action: Clerk**

With regard to the committee estimates sheets, it was agreed that the following changes be made:

Leisure and Amenities

- a) £60k for Manor Road Memorial Park to be carried forward to 2022/23.
- b) The unspent amount of the £25k cemetery budget (£19k) to be carried forward to 2022/23.
- c) The unspent amount of the £10k street name sign budget (£7.5k) to be carried forward to 2022/23.
- d) A budget of £550 be included for 'playing fields- other' budget for 2022/23.

Promotion, Communication and Events

LED displays – budget of £30k to be carried forward to 2022/23 for displays, or expenditure arising from the communication strategy.

The Clerk was to amend the estimates worksheets (attached). **Action: Clerk**

74. To review Fixed Asset Schedule and level of insurance cover.

The schedule of fixed assets, that included details of insurance values, was reviewed. It was noted that items costing less than £1,000 were generally not added to the schedule unless they were bought with other items, with a total cost exceeding £1,000. Whilst bench seats costing in excess of £1,000 would be added to the asset schedule, the Town Council had a standing policy of not insuring bench seats. Given the number of bench seats around the town and insurance excess, it had been viewed that it was appropriate for the Council to just meet the costs whenever a seat got damaged. The Clerk was to consider whether the planters purchased for the Market Place western end should be added to the fixed assets.

Action: Clerk

The insurance policy from Zurich was also reviewed. In the past year Zurich had automatically increased cover on each item by 3%.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Crawford
SECONDED by Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED to note the fixed asset schedule and approve the insurance cover being provided by the Zurich.

75. To consider the adoption of actions contained in a briefing note prepared by the Clerk relating to an informal online meeting of Health Sub-committee members held on 6 December 2021.

The following actions had been put forward:

- Following the receipt of legal advice concerning the temporary closure of beds at the Wantage Community Hospital, to re-engage with Ben Riley of the NHS to ascertain what progress was being made towards consulting on the future of the hospital in August 2022.
- To issue a press release advising of the outcome of the legal advice and the work being undertaken by the sub-committee.
- To seek more data and information from the Health Trust regarding Dr Riley's work, in order to prepare a response to the outcome of this, rather than awaiting the publication of proposals in August.
- To write to the responsible midwife seeking the reopening of the birthing facilities at the Community Hospital and bringing attention to the legal advice that a permanent change would require public consultation.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Johnson
SECONDED BY Councillor Dunford
IT WAS RESOLVED to endorse the above actions.

76. Town Mayor's communications.

The Town Mayor's communications were available to view on the Town Council's website.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

WPF

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

PRECEPT AND RESERVES WORKING SHEET 2022/2023

2021/2022

1. GENERAL RESERVES MOVEMENT

£

Budget
£

Balance of General Reserves 31 March 2021

337,133

365,577

Precept 2021/22

344,400

344,400

Total funds available

681,533

709,977

Forecast Committee Expenditure 2021/22

Leisure and Amenities

(116,647)

(241,806)

Planning

(4,534)

(19,500)

Promotion, Communication and Events

(13,177)

(86,750)

Policy, Management and Finance

(203,323)

(225,170)

Total Forecast Committee Expenditure

(337,681)

(573,226)

Transfers to/from Capital and Project Reserves 2021/22

Cemetery Land Development

20,000

20,000

Community Infrastructure Levy

27,893

27,893

Balance of General Reserves 31 March 2022

391,745

184,644

Balance of Capital and Project Reserves 31 March 2022

239,945

239,945

Estimate Committee Expenditure 2022/2023

Leisure and Amenities

(220,903)

Planning

(50,050)

Promotion, Communication and Events

(77,715)

Policy, Management and Finance

(244,700)

Total Estimate Committee Expenditure

(593,368)

Transfers to/from Capital and Project Reserves 2022/2023

-

Precept 2022/2023 (+3.5%)

355,000

Balance of General Reserves 31 March 2023

153,377

2. CAPITAL AND PROJECT RESERVE

	Balance b/f	Additions/ (Reductions)	Additions/ (Reductions)	Balance at
	1.4.2021	2021-22	2022-23	31.3.2023
	£	£	£	£
Cemetery Land Development	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Community support/infrastructure projects	100,000	-	-	100,000
Neighbourhood Plan projects	120,000	-	-	120,000
Cemetery artwork	1,000	-	-	1,000
Burial reservations	3,945	-	-	3,945
Wantage Silver Band	10,000	-	-	10,000
Elections	5,000	-	-	5,000
Community Infrastructure Levy	27,893	(27,893)	-	-
Total	287,838	(47,893)	-	239,945

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE - FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATES WORKSHEET

	2021/2022 Actual YTD £	2021/2022 Budget £	2021/2022 Forecast £	2022/2023 Estimate £
INCOME				
Allotments	3,290	3,800	3,800	3,800
Cemetery	1,156	6,000	4,000	4,000
Fair Tolls	825	2,475	825	2,562
Market Tolls	1,799	12,000	10,500	18,000
Misc	1,812	-	1,812	-
Parking Fines	160	3,000	500	3,000
Grants and provisions		-		
VC Forecourt	14	30	30	30
TOTAL INCOME	9,056	27,305	21,467	31,392
EXPENSES				
Allotment:				
Maintenance	107	1,500	1,000	1,000
Clearance	400	1,000	1,000	1,000
Water	547	600	1,000	1,000
Rent	795	850	795	795
Allotment-Other	1,250	-	1,250	-
TOTAL Allotment	3,099	3,950	5,045	3,795
Car Park MP:				
Attendant	832	3,000	3,000	4,500
Rates	1,618	4,500	4,042	4,500
Car park mtce			3,000	3,000
Car Park MP-Other	-	500	-	-
TOTAL Car Park MP	2,450	8,000	10,042	12,000
Cemetery:				
Cemetery hedge/trees	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cleaning/clearance	2,368	2,200	4,000	4,000
Grasscutting	4,700	7,700	7,550	8,000
Maintenance	1,085	1,800	1,500	1,500
Rates	443	1,000	868	1,000
Tree maintenance	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cemetery-Other	-	25,000	6,000	19,000
TOTAL Cemetery	8,596	39,700	21,918	35,500
Fairs:				
Attendant	-	600	-	600
Closure	-	241	-	250
Clean up		-		
TOTAL Fairs	-	841	-	850
Market Sq:				
Attendant	-	6,000	1,000	3,500
Floral displays	6,704	5,500	6,704	7,000
CCTV maintenance	1,780	7,500	7,500	7,750
Christmas displays	1,874	13,400	15,000	15,000
Statue clean	-	-	1,500	-
Rates	1,750	2,500	2,470	2,550
Shed rent	700	1,200	1,200	1,200
Market Sq-Other	-	500	500	500
TOTAL Market Sq	12,808	36,600	35,874	37,500

LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE - FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATES WORKSHEET

	2021/2022 Actual YTD £	2021/2022 Budget £	2021/2022 Forecast £	2022/2023 Estimate £
Street Furniture (includes bus shelters)	3,687	7,000	7,000	7,000
Street name signs	-	10,000	2,500	17,500
Salt bins	-	1,200	-	1,200
VC Forecourt wages	7,419	15,000	15,000	15,500
VC Forecourt mtce	50	1,000	1,000	1,000
Weedkilling	795	3,000	2,385	2,500
Other	-	500	500	500
	11,951	37,700	28,385	45,200
Play Areas:				
Grasscutting	550	770	850	900
Maintenance	-	50	-	-
Play Areas-Other	-	500	-	550
TOTAL Play Areas	550	1,320	850	1,450
Projects:				
Alfred's Bath	300	1,000	1,000	1,000
Manor Road Memorial Park		60,000	-	60,000
MP pedestrianisation	4,831	80,000	30,000	50,000
Tree planting	-	-	5,000	5,000
Other	-	-	-	-
	5,131	141,000	36,000	116,000
TOTAL Expenditure	44,585	269,111	138,114	252,295
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES	(35,529)	(241,806)	(116,647)	(220,903)

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WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL**PLANNING COMMITTEE - FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATES WORKSHEET**

	2021/2022 Actual YTD £	2021/2022 Budget £	2021/2022 Forecast £	2022/2023 Estimate £
EXPENSES				
Neighbourhood Plan				
Consultations	-	-	1,500	-
Consultants	-	-	2,500	-
Inspection/referendum	-	15,000	-	15,000
Deputy Clerk support	-	-	-	-
Other	469	-	534	550
Contingency	-	-	-	-
	<hr/> 469	<hr/> 15,000	<hr/> 4,534	<hr/> 15,550
Traffic Calming Measures				
Speed checks	-	500	-	500
VAS	-	4,000	-	4,000
20's Plenty			-	10,000
Waiting restriction changes			-	20,000
TOTAL Expenditure	<hr/> 469	<hr/> 19,500	<hr/> 4,534	<hr/> 50,050

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PROMOTION, COMMUNICATION AND EVENTS COMMITTEE - FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATES

	2021/2022 Actual YTD £	2021/2022 Budget £	2021/2022 Forecast £	2022/2023 Estimate £
INCOME				
Town Centre Manager *	-	16,500	31,000	24,000
EXPENSES				
PC&E:				
Town Centre Manager/Town Project Coordinator	19,032	35,000	33,500	34,500
LED displays/comms strategy	-	30,000	-	30,000
Events	70	20,000	-	20,000
Town Flags	612	1,500	562	1,500
Mobiloo	495	2,500	495	2,500
Newsletter	2,660	6,250	3,960	5,465
Volunteers' Reception	-	1,500	1,500	1,500
Awards	-	-	-	-
TCM promotion	1,628	5,000	3,000	5,000
Website	660	1,000	660	750
Other	104	500	500	500
TOTAL PC&E	25,261	103,250	44,177	101,715
TOTAL EXPENDITURE PC&E	25,261	86,750	13,177	77,715

* 2021/22 TCM funding includes £6k which was due in 2020/21

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WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY, MANAGEMENT & FINANCE COMMITTEE - ESTIMATES WORKSHEET

	2021/22 Actual YTD £	2021/22 Budget £	2021/22 Forecast £	2022/23 Estimate £
PM&F				
INCOME:				
Bank interest	405	3,000	1,000	1,000
EXPENSES				
Grants:				
Children's Centre	11,025	11,025	11,025	11,500
Donations	6,934	15,000	15,000	15,000
Dickensian Evening	2,000	1,500	2,000	2,000
VCI	5,250	10,500	10,500	11,000
Sweatbox	6,500	13,230	13,230	13,500
Youth Community Project	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Letcombe Brook project	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,500
Museum	14,250	19,000	19,000	19,000
VIP/TIC	4,762	6,350	6,350	6,350
October Club	2,500	5,000	5,000	5,500
Twinning	-	-	-	-
Be Free Young Carers	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Summer Festival	3,200	1,500	3,200	2,000
Wantage and Grove Street Pastors	-	500	-	-
Wantage Silver Band	-	-	-	10,000
Wantage Counselling	-	3,150	3,150	3,500
TOTAL Grants	61,421	102,755	104,455	115,850
STAFF COSTS				
Salaries:				
Salary Admin	606	800	1,000	1,000
Salaries-Other	37,659	80,000	70,000	80,000
TOTAL Salaries	38,265	80,800	71,000	81,000
Staff Training	-	750	500	750
Total Staff Costs	38,265	81,550	71,500	81,750
OFFICE COSTS				
Office Mtce:				
Rates and utilities				
Office Mtce-Other	-	2,000	1,000	2,000
TOTAL Office Mtce	-	2,000	1,000	2,000
Office Admin:				
Photocopier	190	800	400	500
Postage	132	390	200	300
Stationery	-	400	300	300
Telephone	375	1,000	700	800
Office 365	1,982	2,000	1,982	2,000
Zoom subscription	480	850	480	500
Office Admin-Other		100	100	100
	3,159	5,540	4,162	4,500
External Audit	800	1,000	800	1,000
Internal Audit	350	750	750	750
Bank Chrg	133	300	250	300
Clerk's Exps	-	100	-	100
Computers	1,200	500	1,200	500
Total Office Costs	5,642	10,190	8,162	9,150

WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY, MANAGEMENT & FINANCE COMMITTEE - ESTIMATES WORKSHEET

	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23
	Actual YTD £	Budget £	Forecast £	Estimate £
Health & Safety				
Insurance	3,562	3,600	3,562	3,700
Mayor's Chain/badges	-	-	-	-
Mayor's Exps	1,610	2,875	2,875	2,975
Civic Visits	-	3,500	-	3,500
Election	-	-	-	-
Freedom of Town	1,547	1,500	1,547	1,500
Subscriptions	2,083	2,100	2,083	2,175
Sundry	600	100	600	100
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9,402	13,675	10,667	13,950
HEALTH SUB-COMMITTEE	4,200	-	4,200	5,000
CLIMATE EMERGENCY SC	-	20,000	10,000	20,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	118,930	228,170	204,323	245,700
TOTAL PM&F NET EXPENDITURE	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	118,930	225,170	203,323	244,700

13/12/2021