



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the **Finance Committee** meeting held on **Monday, 20th January 2020**, at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Gillingham, Dorset.

Present

Cllr Sharon Cullingford (Chairman)	Cllr Mick Hill
Cllr Donna Toye (Deputy Chairman)	Cllr John Kilcourse
Cllr Fiona Cullen	Cllr Val Potheary
Cllr Alan Frith	Cllr Graham Poulter
Cllr Alison Gale	Cllr Barry Von Clemens
Cllr Paul Harris	

In Attendance

Town Clerk: Julie Hawkins

Responsible Financial Officer: Debra Edwards

Press and Public

Press: Michael Streeter, Gillingham and Shaftesbury News

Public: There was one member of the public present

Minute no.

107.	Public Participation. <u>Please note:</u> a period up to a maximum of fifteen minutes will be allowed for public comments and questions restricted to items listed on the following agenda.
	There were no questions from members of the public.
108.	To receive apologies.
	It was agreed and RESOLVED to accept the apologies received from Cllr Mike Gould and Cllr Keith Wareham for personal reasons.
109.	To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday, 9th December 2019.
	It was agreed and RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 9 th December 2019.
110.	To receive questions pertinent to the previous meeting.
	The were no question pertinent to the previous meeting.
111.	To receive any declarations of interest. <u>Please note:</u> members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, section 27, disclosable pecuniary interests.
	There were no declarations of interest.

112.	To approve payments for the previous month.
	It was agreed and RESOLVED that the payments for December 2019, as presented, are approved. Please refer to Appendix A .
113.	To approve any payments between £5,000 and £9,999, in accordance with Financial Regulations, para 4.1.2.
	There were no payments.
114.	To receive and consider sub-committee reports.
	A sub-committee report was circulated. Please refer to Appendix B . There was one recommendation. It was agreed and RESOLVED that the application pack and advert for the position of Horticultural Grounds Person is approved for circulation.
115.	To receive and approve the 3rd quarter management accounts to 31st December 2019.
	The management accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix C . Members thanked the RFO. It was agreed and RESOLVED that the 3 rd quarter accounts to 31 st December 2019 are approved.
116.	To receive any requests for virement of budgets.
	The RFO referred to page 1a of the management accounts and explained the reasons for the virements. It was agreed and RESOLVED that the virements shown on page 1a of the management accounts are approved.
117.	To review the current Grants Policy and make recommendations to Full Council.
	It was agreed and RESOLVED that the Agenda Item No. 9 is deferred until the February meeting of the Finance Committee.
118.	To receive notification from Dorset Council of the taxbase for FY 2020/21 and to consider the impact on the precept.
	The Chairman reminded members that on 9 th December 2019 the town council had agreed and resolved that the total figure of £940,037 in the draft budget for FY 2020/21 was approved in principle (Minute No. 105). <i>NB. Please note that £940,037 is the draft budget figure and not the draft precept figure.</i> The Chairman informed members that Dorset Council has now informed the Town Council of the taxbase figure for Gillingham and explained that this figure is used to calculate the council tax charge on a property in Band D by dividing the precept figure by the taxbase. The charges for other bands are set proportions of this Band D charge. The Chairman explained that the total draft precept figure of £909,118 (as agreed in principle on 9 th December 2019) equates to an increase of 5.88% on the previous year's budget. For a Band D property, this equates to 6.04% i.e. an extra £12.36 a year. The Chairman reiterated that the Town Council has worked hard to obtain value for money for council tax payers, whilst at the same time providing the projects, functions and services that the community needs and values; however she was aware of some

concerns over the proposed increase in the draft budget and asked members to consider the following options in order to reduce the budget further:

Budget No. 5001 – Removal of Cemetery Spoil Heap – Budget reduced by £750
 Budget No. 6202 – Mayor's Expenses (tickets etc) – Budget reduced by £500
 Budget No. 6201 – Mayor's Travelling Expenses – Budget reduced by £500
 Budget No. 7068 – Town Hall Furniture / Office Equipment – Budget reduced by £1,600

The Chairman explained that by reducing the budget by £3,350 the precept figure would be reduced to £905,768 which is a 5.49% increase. For a Band D property, this equates to 5.65% i.e. an extra £11.56 a year.

Cllr Potheary stated that she felt uncomfortable with the increase and asked how much the budget would need to be reduced by in order to bring the increase down to 3.5%.

The RFO informed members that in order to achieve a 3.5% increase, the budget would need to be reduced by £21,784. Cllr von Clemens agreed with Cllr Potheary and asked members to consider ways in which the budget could be reduced. Various options were discussed.

Following the discussion, it was agreed and **RESOLVED** that a recommendation is made to Full Council that the budget for FY 2020/21 is reduced by £9,850 by making the following amendments:

Budget No.	Item	Reduction
5001	Removal of Cemetery Spoil Heap	£750
6202	Mayor's Expenses (tickets etc)	£500
6201	Mayor's Travelling Expenses	£500
7068	Town Hall Furniture / Office Equipment	£1,600
6004	Service Devolution Costs E.g. Dog Warden	£5,000
6401	Town Crier Costs	£1,500
	Recommended Total Reduction:	£9,850

Reducing the budget by £9,850 will reduce the precept figure to £899,268 which is a 4.74% increase in the precept. For a Band D property, this equates to 4.89% i.e. an extra £10.01 a year.

Cllr Potheary abstained from voting.

119. To receive matters pertinent to this meeting. Please note: Members are advised that inclusion of any item is at the Chairman's discretion and that a council cannot lawfully decide upon any matter which is not specified in the summons (agenda).

a. The Chairman informed members that a letter has been received from the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin thanking the town council for funding lighting and tree work in the closed churchyard.

b. The Chairman informed members that a letter has been received from North Dorset Rugby Football Club thanking the council for the grant of £1,000 and confirming that the funds have been used towards the provision and laying of a concrete floor in the new storage building currently being erected.

There being no other business on the agenda, the meeting closed at 8.40pm.	
Signed: _____ Chairman of Finance Committee, Cllr Sharon Cullingford	Date: 17 th February 2020
PLEASE NOTE: These minutes appear as draft minutes until reviewed and ratified by Full Council.	