

**CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2019
AT 7.00 PM**

Present: Cllr J Bull Chairman
Cllr C Cook Vice-Chairman

Cllr C Crapper
Cllr M Crossland
Cllr C James
Cllr N Leverton
Cllr M McBride
Cllr M Mead (ex-officio)
Cllr J Sangster
Cllr D Wesson

Officer: Ron Spurs - Town Clerk

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that all Councillors had an Interest in the items being discussed at this meeting. Cllr Mead declared an Interest in the item relating to the Mayor's Allowance in the Budget.

23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 October 2019, copies of which had been previously circulated to Members, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

24 ADJOURNMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

25 BUDGET 2020-2021

(a) The Budget for the financial year 2020-2021 had been prepared by Officers and circulated to Members, a copy of which is attached at Annex A.

The Clerk said that the Auditor had advised that the amount in the Reserves is rather high for a small Council and consideration should be given to it being reduced. The recommended level is a maximum of twelve months operating costs. The Reserves are invested with WODC, receiving 0.45% interest. Other possibilities had been looked at over the years, but WODC offered the instant access needed.

The report highlighted the following adjustments to be made:

101 - Central Costs

4025 Audit. Increase to £2,550 due to increased number of visits per annum.

4027 Telephones/Internet. Increase to £2,420 to cover increased line rental and broadband.

4035 Professional Fees. Reduce to £5,000 for any legal advice needed by the Council.

4041 HR/H&S. Increase to £4,350 to cover the additional cost of Health and Safety.

150 - Other Costs & Income

1090 Interest Received. Increase to £3,000. Interest has increased.

202 - Town Hall

4102 Water Charges. Increase to £800 due to increased usage of the Town Hall.

4105 Gas & Electric. Increase to £4,420, due to increased usage.

4120 Cleaning & Waste Removal. Increase to £2,450. Increased recycling and internal window cleaning costs.

210 - Properties

4200 Community Centre. Set at £1,500. Overspent this year due to exterior repainting.

4210 Allandale Centre. Set at £3,000. Maintenance, dependent on need.

215 - Recreation & Open Spaces

1070 Misc Income. No change.

1300 Grants Received. Playground on new development at The Crescent, £63,000 awaited from WODC.

220 - Town Maintenance

4405 Hedges and Paths. Increase to £9,800. Budget did not fully reflect contract.

4425 Grass Cutting. Increase from £18,500 to £21,750. Increase in number of cuts per annum.

301 - Communication & Events

1315 Events Income. £6,000. Increase due to addition of Carnival income.

4315 Events Expenditure. Increase by £5,000. Exceeded due to Carnival.

Earmarked Reserves:

4903 Tree Initiative. Add £50,000 for tree planting project.

4911 Christmas Lights. Add £5,000 for purchase of more lights next year.

4917 ARRG Pavilion Refurbishment. £200,000. To be set up for 2020/2021.

4918 Environmental Projects. £50,000. To be set up for 2020/2021.

Some queries were raised as follows:

1230 - Streatfield House. The figure of £20,600 is the total income from FitFigures and the Shake Shop. It is lower than last year as the Shake Shop pay a lower rent than the previous occupant, which will be reviewed in three years.

4403 - Baldwin Mews Electricity. The Council continues to pay for electricity for street lighting because it has a duty of care for those using the Scout Building and Squash Club.

4430- CCTV. The figure of £10,000 seems disproportionate but is a nominal fee paid by every town regardless of the number of cameras. WODC are looking to overhaul the service. The Clerk has discussed with WODC improving coverage with standalone cameras in particular locations that would work with the existing system. Both this and a proposal to upgrade cameras with a night vision facility would come before a future Council meeting.

1300 - Recreation Grants Received. The figure of £71,000 in the current year's budget related to the Council taking over maintenance of the new playground at Empire Drive. The sum has yet to be received from WODC.

4415 - Town Maintenance: Flowers. The year to date figure is zero because the annual invoice has not yet been received.

4090 - Furniture and Equipment. The refurbishment of the Town Hall would come out of Reserves as the project is not yet finalised.

The Clerk recommended the following adjustments:

4730 - Town Centre Improvements – reduce from £40,000 to £5,000

4300 - The Dell – reduce from £15,000 to £1,200.

4309 - ARRG Pavilion – reduce from £50,000 to £5,000 to cover repairs.

The Committee RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Budget with the above amendments be approved by full Council. Cllr Crossland abstained.

26 PRECEPT 2020/2021

The Precept for the financial year 2020-2021 had been prepared and circulated to Members. The current Precept is £388,049, which equates to £73.29 per Band D property.

The Committee discussed the options of either reducing the Precept, leaving it as it is or increasing it. A vote was taken, and the Committee RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that Council approves that the Precept for 2020/2021 be held at £388,049.

27 REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2020-2021

A copy of the Financial Regulations for 2020-2021 had been circulated to Members. The Regulations had been revised to reflect guidance from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Committee RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to Council that the Financial Regulations be approved.

28 REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT POLICY

A copy of the Procurement Policy had been circulated to Members. Again, the Policy had been revised to reflect guidance from NALC.

The Committee RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to Council that the Procurement Policy be approved.

29 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting.

Confidential item follows.

30 APPOINTMENT OF WEBSITE CONTRACTOR

The meeting ended at 8.15pm.

Chairman