



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING

held on **Monday 16th January 2023** at 7.00pm

This meeting was held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Gravel Hill, Wombourne, WV5 9HA

Present – Committee Members-

Councillors: Barry Bond MBE, Mike Davies (Vice-Chairman), Jan Evans, Mark Evans, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick, Martin Perry (arrived 19.04pm), Mary Roberts (Chairman), Daisy Tait (arrived 19.04pm)

Present – Non-Committee Members- Councillors: Cheryl Davies, Elizabeth Keeling, Alan Peace

Absent without apologies – N/A

Clerk – Rachael Wright

Members of the public – N/A

01/23 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors John Pike and Robert Reade.

02/23 – Declarations of Interest

Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM declared an interest in Wombourne Best Kept Village Committee and Wombourne and District Community Association, Councillors Alan Peace and Mary Roberts declared the same interests and in addition Wombourne Carnival Committee.

03/23 – Approval of last Committee Meeting minutes from 14th November 2022

Members approved the minutes of the last meeting.

04/23 – Matters arising from 14th November 2022

77/22 – The Clerk informed Members Dangerous Sheep Ltd had found an alternative venue in Wombourne for their Wombourne's Got Talent competition.

82/22 – The first meeting of the working group for the King's Coronation would take place on Monday 30th January following the meeting of the Civic Centre Management Committee.

05/23 – Budget and Precept 2023/2024

A spreadsheet setting out the budget proposals which the clerk had prepared was shared via projector screen for Members to see.

It was acknowledged that with the cost-of-living crisis everything possible should be done to keep the increase in budget headings and the precept as low as possible.

With this in mind the budgets for hospitality allowance (Civic Reception), a cabinet for the Chairman's retired chain, minute bounding, Office 365 emails for Councillors, flashing speed signs, funding for the history room, benches at Brickbridge Playing Fields and funds for general improvements were all taken out and set to zero.

Budgets for postage, water rates at the Council’s bungalow, computers and software, contingencies, community events, cleaning materials at the Civic Centre, fire alarm and emergency lighting, CCTV, PRS licence, planned maintenance, pitch marking and grass seed at Brickbridge Playing Fields, water rates at Brickbridge Playing Fields and cleaning materials were all reduced.

New budget headings added included the transfer of website hosting, packs for newly elected Councillors, King’s Coronation, photographs of the King, window repairs in Civic Centre, heating system updates, new blinds in Bourne Room in Civic Centre, youth café, the lease at Brickbridge Playing Fields, and the associated legal fees.

Big ticket items within the budget included paying for the 2023 elections, and gas and electricity at the Civic Centre. Members also acknowledged the need for a new roof on the Council Chamber / above Goode Tutoring which needed to be completed before the end of the current financial year due to water ingress, as well as work to the windows in the Civic Centre for the same reason.

The Committee agreed earmarked reserves as set out on the spreadsheet with an additional £21,750 for Civic Centre roof (with the same amount being earmarked over 4 years to pay for a new pitched roof), and £10,000 to build up a fund to pay for new windows for the Civic Centre with the intention of building up this pots over several years.

The clerk reminded Members they had set out a Reserves Policy which recommended that general reserves be held at a minimum of 6 months precept, i.e., £119,368.

Members were reminded of the Practitioners Guidance and recommendations in the Good Councillors Guide, which states a council should hold between 3-12 months expenditure in general reserves, with the amounts set out for all Members to see on the spreadsheet.

Some considerable debate took place, in particular around the budget heading for the hospitality allowance being taken out, and the budget for the King’s Coronation.

Councillor Mike Davies proposed that a 19% increase be added to the precept, and therefore a budget of £406,331 be set for 2023/2024 and a precept of £284,096 be requested from the South Staffordshire Council. Councillor Vince Merrick seconded the proposal. No amendments were proposed, and all Members voted in favour of the proposition.

With a base rate of £5237.23, band D properties in Wombourne will pay £54.25 annually (£7.96 increase per annum from 2022/2023) or £1.04p weekly (0.15p increase per week from 2022/2023).

The agreed summary figures were:

<u>INCOME</u>	Budgeted 22/23	Total Actual to 30.11.22	Projected to 31.3.23	Total Forecast 22/23	Proposed Budget 2023/24
Parish council	239,654	240,543	957	241,501	239,748
Civic Centre	63,752	79,736	33,546	113,282	138,351
Recreation and Amenities	4,200	1,415	0	1,415	1,000
Gross income (A)	307,606	321,694	34,503	356,198	

					379,099
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	Budgeted 22/23	Total Actual to 30.11.22	Projected to 31.3.23	Total Forecast 22/23	Proposed Budget 2023/24
Parish council	223,936	161,878	84,596	246,474	257,812
Civic Centre	143,769	87,658	56,124	133,089	127,308
Recreation and Amenities	21,400	7,583	13,010	20,593	21,211
	Budgeted 22/23	Total Actual to 30.11.22	Projected to 31.3.23	Total Forecast 22/23	Proposed Budget 2023/24
Gross Expenditure (B)	389,105	257,119	153,730	400,156	406,331
Surplus (A-B)	-81,499	-64,575	-119,227	-43,958	-27,232

The recommendation to be put forward to Full Council from the Committee will be a budget of £406,331 be set for 2023/2024 and a precept of £284,096 be requested from the South Staffordshire Council.

The meeting closed at 7.46pm.

Signed:

Dated: