



WOMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

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

held on **Monday 20th January 2025** at 7.00pm

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

Present – Committee Members -

Councillors: Mike Davies, Jan Evans (Vice-Chairman), Elizabeth Keeling, Dan Kinsey BEM, Vince Merrick, Martin Perry, Mary Roberts (Chairman)

Present – Non-Committee Members - Councillors: Alan Peace

Clerk – Rachael Wright

01/25 – Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Evans and Ian Sadler.

02/25 – Declarations of Interest

None

03/25 – Approval of last Committee Meeting minutes from 4th November 2024

Members approved the minutes of the last meeting.

04/25 – Matters arising from 4th November 2024

67/24 – The Clerk informed members she continued to follow up the grant funding for benches and the bus shelter.

05/25 – Budget and Precept 2025/2026

A spreadsheet setting out the budget proposals, which the Clerk had prepared, was shared onto a projector screen for members to see. A copy of the spreadsheet had been distributed to all members with the agenda ten days prior to the meeting.

The Chairman noted the intention was for members to have reviewed the budget in detail before the meeting, however the Clerk ran through the income and expenditure, noting items of interest and new items within the budget.

Members agreed the investment with CCLA made a significant impact to their income.

It was noted lease and room hire increases has been included in the income, however a conservative view had been taken with regards to room hire due to a number of dates being available to book in 2025.

New budget headings included a new photocopier and associated networking, annual servicing of the automatic doors, inspection hatches in the brick pillars, new hand dryers, a keyboard and stand, portable PA system, pothole repairs at Brickbridge Playing Fields, roof repairs at the public toilets, as well as essential maintenance.

The Committee agreed earmarked reserves to the value of £70,282.50 as set out on the spreadsheet with an additional £21,750 for the Civic Centre roof (with the same amount being earmarked over 5 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 pot over several years.

Also included, £1282.50 to top up the staff salary contingency fund, £5,000 towards the elections to be held in 2027, £9,000 towards a new roof at Brickbridge Playing Fields Changing Rooms and £750 towards tree pruning in the village as part of the agreement for the Christmas Lights Contract.

New earmarked reserves are £10,000 towards the Council Chamber roof, £2,500 for Christmas lighting poles and tests and £10,000 towards re-fit of toilets at the Civic Centre.

Members reviewed the wish list items that the Clerk had costed at the request of the Council's Committees and members agreed £68,647 worth of items within the budget, including £4,880 for a bus shelter and installation (location to be agreed, but request from Councillor Alan Peace was for it to be cited along Common Road near the Giggetty Lane shops), £10,361 for a Village Orderly, £5,700 for pay and display machines and signage, £1,000 for business brunches, £250 fee for Fairtrade Council status and £1,500 for two community events.

Also included was £5,690 for a Parish van, £28,831 for a bar upgrade, £2,500 for new fridges behind the bar (suggestion was for us to buy them rather than contribute towards them), £150 for Parish badges, £2,200 for an event at the Civic Centre, £585 for bleed kits to go into defibrillators in the village and £5,000 for a laser show at the Christmas Light Switch On Event. It was agreed if any of these items did not go ahead that the funds would be put into earmarked reserves.

The Clerk provided a breakdown to some of the budgeted items, including the Village Orderly and Parish van.

The Clerk reminded Members they had set a Reserves Policy last year, which recommended that general reserves be set to the equivalent of annual income for room hire, commission and 3 months' expenditure, totalling £178,523.90.

Members reviewed the Band D increases, and after some debate, Councillor Mary Roberts proposed a 5% increase to the precept, which was seconded by Councillor Dan Kinsey BEM. Councillors Elizabeth Keeling, Vince Merrick and Martin Perry were in favour of this proposal. Councillors Mike Davies and Jan Evans were against it, favouring a 4% increase.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposal to be put to Full Council would be for a 5% increase on the 2024/25 precept.

The proposal means the precept request for 2025/2026 will be £376,309.50, with a budget of £484,682.66 and general reserves of £185,195.07.

With a base rate of £5,250.40, Band D properties in Wombourne will pay £71.67 annually (£3.18 increase per annum from 2024/2025) or £1.38 weekly (0.6p increase per week from 2024/2025).

The agreed summary figures were:

<u>INCOME</u>	Budgeted 24/25	Total Actual to 30.11.24	Projected to 31.3.25	Total Forecast 24/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26
Parish Council	2195	4,538.57	3,800	8,338.57	13,020
Civic Centre	135,466.90	89,963.60	46,306.70	136,269.67	132,401.90
Recreation and Amenities	3,000	3,035	0.00	3,035	2,200
Gross Income (A)	140,661.90	97,537.17	50,106.70	147,643.24	147,621.90
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	Budgeted 24/25	Total Actual to 30.11.24	Projected to 31.3.25	Total Forecast 24/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26
Parish Council	242,023.81	153,852.69	87,869.35	231,622.04	265,821
Civic Centre	119,897.52	75,056.17	42,307.85	107,364.02	118,346.52
Recreation and Amenities	72,941.33	24,558.43	43,318.72	67,877.15	31,868.14
Gross Expenditure (B)	434,862.66	253,467.29	173,495.92	406,863.21	416,035.66
	Budgeted 24/25	Total Actual to 30.11.24	Projected to 31.3.25	Total Forecast 24/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26
Precept (C)	358,390	358,390	0	358,390	376,309.50
Surplus (A+C-B)	64,189.24				107,895.74

The recommendation to be put forward to Full Council from the Committee will be a budget of £484,682.66 be set for 2025/2026 and a precept of £376,309.50 be requested from the South Staffordshire Council.

The meeting closed at 7.47pm.

Signed:

Dated: