



TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of Tatworth and Forton Parish Council held on 4th January 2024 at 7pm Brewer Room, Tatworth Memorial Hall.

Present: Chairman Councillor D Peake, Councillors C Brown, P Chapple, R Down, L Matthey, K Patay and P Rosser

Clerk Nigel Tinley

There were two members of the Public and no Press present.

The Members of Public were invited to speak and Councillor Heal requested that the chair open the meeting to the public for agenda item 05/24.

01/24 Apologies for Absence

None.

02/24 Declarations of interest

None

03/24 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23rd November 2023

Proposed by Councillor Patay, Seconded by Councillor Chapple. All in Favour with 2 abstentions (not at last meeting).

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council Finance Committee Meeting held on 23rd November 2023 be signed as a correct record.

04/24 Reconciliation of Finances To 31st December 2023 with report of finances against Budgets up to 31st December

The Reconciliation of Finances was signed off by Councillor Brown.

Have not received NatWest statements to reconcile.

The Clerk presented the finances against budget spreadsheet – it was noted that the balance of bank accounts did not add down correctly. Corrected spreadsheet to be reissued with the Minutes.

05/24 Draft budget for devolved Somerset Council services

The meeting was opened to the public.

- No firm data from Somerset Council
- No indication as to what services we have to take over and at what cost
- Do we go in with a larger Town Council? – if so, we must have specific service contracts to ensure what we pay for does get done.

Still much uncertainty and lack of leadership from Somerset Council. Councillors will be attending Somerset LCN meeting.

Hopefully there will be more information available before we decide the precept at 1st February Full Council meeting. Deadline noon 2nd February.

Meeting closed to the public.

06/24 To approve draft budget/precept for 2024-25 for presentation to full council

The budget spreadsheet from the previous meeting was presented, the only adjustment being the reduction of the Youth Club budget. The shortfall is £64,650. Much discussion regarding the need to balance our books, and the uncertainty of the Somerset Council devolution.

Councillor Down proposed a precept of £60,000 which is an increase of 20.48%. For a Band D property an increase of 19.14%, £9.55 a year extra. This was seconded by Councillor Peake.

Councillor Brown counter-proposed a precept of £65,000 to match our budget, an increase of 30.52%. For a Band D property an increase of 29.06%, £14.50 a year extra.

The Councillors voted on the original proposal: 2 for, 5 against, and the counter-proposal: 5 for, 2 against.

It is appreciated that this will all change should devolution lead to increased expenditure.

RESOLVED: The Finance Committee recommends to the Full Council the draft budget and a precept of £65,000, excluding any devolution demands.

07/24 Under 5.6 financial regulations to confirm monthly payments 2024

The Clerk disclosed the current monthly standing orders and direct debits are as follows:

- 1) BT – phone and internet, varies, last month £33.67 inc VAT
- 2) Rollpay – The cost of our Pension administration £16.80 inc VAT

- 3) Legal & General – Pensions contributions, varies, last month £51.15 no VAT
- 4) Community Table – 4 payments left of £70
- 5) Active Learning & Skills £510

08/24 To approve opening of alternative savings account and transfer away from NatWest

The Clerk introduced an organisation, CCLA (Churches, Charities & Local Authorities) that operates a low risk cash based investment. Although the rates of return were excellent the fact that they are not subject to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (£85k) was a concern to the Councillors. They asked the Clerk to look again.

09/24 Date of Next Meeting – 15th February 2024

Meeting closed 8:08pm