

**SPECIAL POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Held on Wednesday 20 January 2016**

**At 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

**Present:**

Councillor: J S King (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs B J Churchill	C Holliday
	A D Harvey	T J Morris
	Mrs C E Reynolds	C K Woodward
Non Committee Members:	Dr S E Bartington	C Brown
	H W Chirgwin	P J Dorward
	H B Eaglestone	D S Enright
	L M Price	
Officers:	Town Clerk	RFO
	Democratic Services Officer	

F047 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Beames and Doughty.

F048 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declaration of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

F049 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no Members of the public present for this item.

F050 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED:** that standing order 44(b) be suspended to allow all Councillors present to participate fully in the meeting.

F051 **COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL/SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME:  
REVISED BUDET 2015/16 AND ESTIMATES 2016/17**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO as circulated with the agenda. A Member thanked the officers for their hard work on the budget, which was endorsed by others.

A draft press release on the budget and precept was tabled prior to the meeting. Members felt this summed up the situation perfectly. The budget had been drawn up to balance, making savings where possible and allowing for the potential withdrawal in 2017/18 of the Council Tax Reduction Grant

*Cllr Bartington entered at 6.35pm.*

A Member proposed that the budget as presented was approved.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the RFO's report be noted;
2. that the recommendations reached on 11 January 2016 still stand, and that the increase in Precept for 2016/17 be 3.26%.

F0525 **APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S EXPENDITURE ON ITEMS COVERED BY SECTION 137 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO as circulated with the agenda. She drew Members' attention to the fact that the Christmas Lights budget had been increased.

A Member commented that at the Budget and Finance Working Party meeting the issue of covenants had been raised. He wanted to know where the Council had got to with this. The Town Clerk explained that this was not covered by section 137 of the LGA 1972. However, she informed Members that she had submitted an application for the General Power of Competence which in future as the power of first resort and opened more opportunities for the Council.

*Cllr Brown entered at 6.38pm.*

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Council, in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure:

	£
Recreational Grants	3,560
Direct grant to Volunteer Link Up	500
Direct grant to Town Twinning Association	350
Subsidised room lettings	1,800
Town Christmas Lights & Entertainment	35000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41210</b>

F053 **PRECEPT FOR 2016/17**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO, as circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Town Clerk be authorised to sign and serve a precept on the West Oxfordshire District Council, in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), requiring the District Council to pay the Town Council the sum of £1,272,878 in respect of Council Tax for the town during the financial year 2016/17.

F054 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

F055 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received a confidential verbal report from the Personnel Committee held earlier that evening.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

F056 **UPDATE ON THE CORN EXCHANGE AND THE SALE OF THE LANGDALE HALL**

The Town Clerk updated Members on the recent developments with regard to the sale of Langdale Hall. She advised that a contract had been signed accepting the conditional offer agreed a while ago, and that a planning application was anticipated soon.

She also updated the Committee on communication from the Corn Exchange Shadow Trust. Its application for charitable status was still awaited and according to the Shadow Trust Chairman he anticipated news of this by February 2016. The Shadow Trust was also recruiting a Producer Manager and had asked if the Council would be able to cover the emoluments via the start-up grant. Members discussed the implications and the employment status of the intended employee and suggested the Town Clerk clarifies with the Shadow Trust that it would be the employer not the Town Council. Concern was also raised with the fact that a bank account had not been opened as yet.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

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The meeting closed at 7pm.

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Chairman.