



Devizes
Town Council

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DEVIZES TOWN **COUNCIL**

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Devizes Town Council Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: 17 December 2009

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, St John's Street, Devizes

Enquiries: Town Hall - Tel: 01380 722160

Chairman: The Town Mayor (Councillor Leighton)

Councillors:	Beinhorn	Mrs Burton	Callow
	East	Evans	Mrs Evans
	Gagen	Gudgeon	Hopkins
	Nash	Parsons	Smith
	A R Taylor	Mrs Taylor	C S Winchcombe
	Mrs Winchcombe		

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 29 October 2009.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURE(S) OF INTEREST

To receive any disclosures by a Councillor(s) and/or Officers in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the provisions of

Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. To receive announcements and communications.
5. To answer questions (if any) under standing order No. 15.

6. MINUTES OF MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION

Since the last meeting of the Council on 29 October 2009 the following Committees have taken place whose minutes have been approved as a correct record and signed by the appropriate committee chairman.

The minutes of these meetings have been previously circulated to all members.

COMMITTEE NAME	COMMITTEE DATE
Planning	13 October 2009
Planning	29 October 2009
Planning	10 November 2009
Planning	24 November 2009
Community & Civic Resources	13 October 2009
Recreation & Properties	29 October 2009
Recreation & Properties	24 November 2009

NOTE: Before dealing with the next item (No 7) the Council will wish to consider whether or not to suspend Standing Order No 5 (members to stand when speaking). If the Standing Order is to be suspended, it must be done by way of a proposition, duly seconded and carried.

7. REPORT FOR DECISION – APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR AS MAYORAL NOMINATION FOR 2010/2011

Recommendation

Members are requested to confirm the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Pete Smith, as the Council's nomination for Mayor for the municipal year 2010/11.

Purpose of the Report

To seek clarification for the council's nomination for Mayor for the municipal year 2010/11.

Background

It is tradition for the Council to confirm the Deputy Mayor as its nomination for Mayor for the following municipal year.

Options Considered

The Council is requested to confirm Councillor Pete Smith as its nomination.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Each year a budget provision is made for the Mayoralty.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are not aware of any risk implications associated with this decision. The final appointment of Mayor is undertaken at the Annual Statutory meeting in May.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

8. REPORT FOR DECISION – DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR 2010/11

Recommendation

The Council is recommended to formally agree the draft estimates for financial year 2010-11.

Purpose of the Report

To formally agree the income and expenditure budget for financial year 2010-11.

Background

At a meeting of the Council on the 29 October 2009 the draft estimates were considered by members and it was agreed that the proposed grant of £1,000 to Devizes Hospital & Community Radio be taken against 2009/10 general reserves and that general grants on the draft estimates be increased from £2,000 to £3,000.

This left the overall precept unchanged at £448,506, a 0.65% increase on 2009/10.

The Council are now required to set a precept for financial year 2010-11 and therefore before this can be determined, there needs to be an agreement on the level of income and expenditure for the year.

To aid members' decisions, officers have highlighted the main areas of income and expenditure.

Member Training

Two years ago, members' training was increased to prepare for the new council. It is hoped that members who feel that they would benefit from training will come forward and seek appropriate training.

Parish Council Election Fund

Following the 2007 elections, the reserves held by the council for this purpose were exhausted. The fund is now being gradually built up again.

Twinning Travel Costs

Next year the twinning visit will take place in Mayenne, France.

Devizes and District Twinning Association

The Twinning Association now deals with its own affairs for which it receives a grant.

Mayoral Allowance

This has been increased in line with the retail price index in September 2009.

Town Crier Allowance

The Council have agreed that they would extend the duties of the Town Crier and this has a cost implication

Web Site Costs

This budget represents the ongoing hosting and maintenance costs.

Marketing & Promotion

This is the cost associated with the production of the Messenger.

Miscellaneous and professional advice

From time to time the council seeks specialist advice on a number of issues. It is therefore prudent that budget provision is made to meet such costs.

Central Services to the Public

Grace & Favour and Free Lettings

This is the notional cost of Grace & Favour lettings and free lettings to the agreed list of organisations. The grant is used to offset the income shown in the venues department.

Commercial Property Repairs

In most circumstances it is the responsibility of the tenant to undertake repairs. However, on occasions there are times when that responsibility falls to the Town Council, therefore some budget provision is strongly advisable.

Commercial Properties Bad Debt

Audit requirements mean that an allowance must be made for bad debt. It is anticipated that no debt will be written off in the current financial year therefore this will be placed in an EMR if not utilised and no 2010/11 provision will be made.

Commercial Property Legal Fees

Each year there is usually some work required in a change to a lease or an issuing of a new lease, which incurs legal costs.

Commercial Property Management

Although Town Council staff deals with the day-to-day collection of rent, the Council employs an agent to deal with rental valuations, surveys and condition reports, marketing and for general advice. This is five-year contract, which is due for renewal in March 2010.

Festival & Carnival Free Use

This is the notional cost of free use extended to the Festival and Carnival that is offset by an equal notional Venues income. Members may at some time wish to review the principles of the grant and ask the recipients to demonstrate their need for continued Town Council support

Hillworth Park Events

Budget in preparation of publicising events in anticipation of receipt of the green light on the HLF Stage 2 application.

Heritage

Water Rates

Water rates in respect of the fountain.

Chandelier Restoration

Cost of rewiring the three chandeliers in Assembly Room. Additional budget for replacement parts for chandeliers. Officers have found it almost impossible to find spares despite trawling round the main dealers in the UK.

Picture Restoration

The picture frames of George III and Queen Charlotte in the Assembly Room have become very distressed and will look even shabbier once the Assembly Room has been redecorated. The frame of the picture of Joshua Smith is also need of some attention before it can be re-hung.

Grant

Officers have made a £3000 allocation in the budget for the Museum as has happened in the last two years

Venues – Town Hall & Corn Exchange

Utility Costs

The Councils' Admin & Finance Manager has recently contracted a new two-year electricity deal and one-year gas deal therefore stabilising utility charges over the short term.

Marketing

The Direct Services Manager is planning a number of activities for 2010/11 and has determined that she will need to similar budget to the current year to achieve this.

Maintenance

Maintenance within the venues is split into three cost headings.

- Maintenance contracts for service contracts
- Responsive Maintenance as a contingency for breakdowns, which inevitably occur.
- Planned Maintenance is small works that each year the Services Manager thinks should be undertaken to keep the building in good order.

Purchase of Tools and Equipment

Within the estimates the purchase of tools and equipment is shown in two ways. The heading 'Replacement of Tools and Equipment' is where funding is allocated for those items that fail in any financial year and need to be replaced or where it is felt the purchase of a piece of equipment will aid the operation of the business. New capital style equipment is identified in the project list.

Licences

Each year the individual premises licences will need to be renewed and there is naturally a cost implication associated with that.

Leisure Centre

Revenue Funding

It should be noted that the agreement actually stipulates that the level of increase is based on the RPI for April.

Sports Pitch

With the removal of the pre-fabricated changing facility and with no firm plans on the table costs associated with Green Lane will be rent and minimal maintenance costs.

Open Spaces

Hillworth Park Project

No revenue budget allocation has been made in respect of project development costs as they are to be financed from existing earmarked reserves.

However there is allocation made in the capital programme to continue to build the matched funding committed in the HLF application.

Community Spaces Central Support

Utility Costs

The Councils' Admin & Finance Manager has recently contracted a new two-year electricity deal and one year Gas deal in respect of the Town Hall and the Corn Exchange. Any utility charges falling outside that scope will also be subject to a new contract.

Telephone Fax

Within the Parks Department some staff need to carry a mobile phone in addition to their radio.

Replacement Tools and Equipment

As with the venues, within the estimates the purchase of tools and equipment is shown in two ways. The heading replacement of tools and equipment is where funding is allocated for those items that fail in any financial year and need to be replaced or where it is felt that the purchase of a piece of equipment will aid the operation of the business. Planned new equipment is usually identified in the project list at the end of the estimates

Seeds and Bulbs

The budget for Seeds and Bulbs are split across two cost centres – this in Open Spaces and also in tourism to reflect the contribution that the floral displays make. Costs are split between the two cost centres

Tree and Woodland Management

The budget heading was significantly increased in 2008/09 as a result of the in house tree survey, which was undertaken.

In 2010/11 further works will be needed to trees on the Small and Large Green and other locations.

Tourism

Christmas Lighting

The Budget is in line with last year.

Watering Contact

The Budget is in line with last year.

Hanging Basked Poles

The location of the poles for both the hanging baskets and the Christmas lights allows for maximum visual impact. Unfortunately this makes them vulnerable to vehicle impact, which results each year with one or two requiring replacement.

Devizes in Bloom – South West in Boom

The Budget for Devizes In Bloom has been increased a little to meet the current costs of the event. South West in Boom has been kept at the current level.

Town Centre Manager

The Council has agreed that it would make a £20,000 contribution to the Town Centre Manager costs for 2010/11.

Central Support

Staff Training

Maintaining well-trained and knowledgeable staff is essential to the council. Again this year there is a number of staff booked on training courses and seminars later this year and it is planned to continue this next year.

Telephone / Postage

No budget increase against 2009/10.

Insurances

Insurance costs have reduced and therefore the 2010/11 budget has been reduced to correspond.

Financial Services

This cost heading is for professional accountancy services needed to help prepare the year-end accounts. The Admin & Finance Manager has been in post for 9 months and is now more familiar with the RBS Software and Town Council accounting requirements. It is anticipated that assistance at year-end will be less for 2010/11 and this budget has been reduced accordingly.

Devizes and Roundway JBC

Precept

At it's meeting on the 15 October 2009, the burial committee set a precept of £80,397 for financial year 2010/11. Devizes Town Council portion of the precept is 73.4% totalling £59,012.

Community

CCTV Revenue Funding

It has been agreed to keep our contribution unchanged at £7500 for maintaining the CCTV system in Devizes.

Salaries

The national negotiated salary increase for financial year 2009/10 has been completed and therefore officers have allowed for 1.0%.

An assumed increase for 2010/11 is set at 1.5%. Some staff will also receive an incremental rise on their salary scale.

The cost of salaries also included a provision for sickness, which is 3% of the gross payroll. Likewise an amount of mileage has also been included.

No provision has been made for any increase that might accrue from the adoption of the National Terms and Conditions of Service

Income

Corporate and Democratic

Although the Council is carrying a high level of earmarked reserves bank interest has collapsed due to the global banking crisis. Officers have adjusted the budget accordingly.

Commercial Properties

Budgeted income reflects current lease contracts.

Town Hall and Corn Exchange

Bookings for the venues are currently fairly good and therefore officers have increased room hire income to reflect this. However officers have been more cautious with the income for ancillary services as the current trend is for hirers to limit the amount of extras they book.

Sports Pitches

With the removal of the pre-fabricated changing facility and with no firm plans on the table income associated with Green Lane will be minimal.

Open Spaces

A small increase in income for hiring the Green 2010/11.

Central Support

The resources needed to run and administer to the affairs of the Joint Burial Committee have been reviewed, and the level of work, which the Town Council will undertake has been agreed. The review has influenced the charge made to the Joint Burial Committee

NEW PROJECTS

Within the heading new projects, officers have set out items of expenditure, which are one off in nature and therefore should not be considered under the normal revenue headings.

Dishwasher & Kitchen upgrade

The pass through dishwasher in the Town Hall is now worn out and needs to be replaced. This will entail additional plumbing works.

Ceres Hall Floor

The wood floor in the Ceres Hall needs to be stripped, sanded and resealed.

Town Hall and Corn Exchange Decoration

Painting of the walls in the Assembly Room and the first floor rooms and the area of the stairs in the Corn Exchange is a requirement.

Curtains – Corn Exchange

It is intended that the monies will be budgeted over a three-year period for this project. This will also include black out blinds in the Wessex Room, which will help with both insulation and controlling glare on the projection screens.

Carpets – Corn Exchange

New carpet in the Foyer and the stairs.

2012 Olympics

General provision on the request of members of the Council to commit a sum to celebrate the 2012 London Olympics.

Mower

New mower for Hillworth Park and all other open spaces under control of Town Council.

Buffer

New buffer to enable cleaning the floors of both venues.

Podium for Conferences

Lectern podium, which may be hired out. Currently we hire this in.

War Memorial

A proposal to include the names of Devizes people who have lost their lives in conflicts since the First World War on the War Memorial in Long Street has been received from the Royal British Legion. The budgeted amount reflects a contribution from Devizes Town Council.

Royal Celebration

General provision on the request of members of the Council to commit a sum to commemorate the Royal celebration in 2012.

BMX Park

General provision on the request of members of the Council to commit a sum towards a BMX Park.

Drews Pond Wood

Request for funding to enable four volunteers to receive training in chainsaw usage.

Options Considered

Members need to decide what level of income and expenditure they wish for financial year 2010/11

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The budget reflects the Council's ability to fund its Financial and Resource needs for financial year 2010/11.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

In accordance with section 50 of the Local Government Finance act 1992, the Council must calculate its budget requirement, being the difference between its income and expenditure. This will allow the Town Council to set a precept in accordance with Section 41, of the Local Government Finance act 1992.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Not setting a budget would leave the committee open to challenge by the auditors for financial mismanagement. In addition, the Council will not be able to set a precept and therefore will have its precept imposed by the District Council.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any implications Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

9. REPORT FOR DECISION – AGREE PRECEPT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2009/10

Recommendation

The Council are required to set the precept for the financial year 2009/2010 in accordance with the agreed budget for the same period.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is for the Council to pass a resolution setting the precept for financial year 2009/010.

Background

Following the setting of the Town Council's budgeted income and expenditure for financial year 2009/10, the Council needs to confirm the level of precept demand to be served on Kennet District Council.

Options Considered

Members must agree a level of precept for financial year 2009/10

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The precept underpins the agreed financial budget and therefore must be set in accordance with that budget.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

Under section 41 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council has a power to raise finance through local taxation.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with setting the 2010/11 precept.

Risk Assessment

If the Council was not to set a precept, the District Council has the power to set a precept on the Town Councils behalf. If this was to happen the Town Council might not be able to fund its agreed expenditure.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

10. TO PASS THE FOLLOWING SEALING RESOLUTION

THAT the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to or the Town Clerk do sign on behalf of the Council where appropriate any Orders, Deeds or Documents necessary to give effect to any of the matters and recommendations contained in the reports received and adopted at this meeting or other decisions of the Council thereat.

11. QUESTION TIME

At the Town Mayor's discretion members will be allowed a short period in which to put Questions on matters of concern to the Council which are not contained in the reports of matters formally considered by the Council at this meeting.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions addressed to the Chairman concerning the administration, function or responsibilities of the Council or upon a matter, which was the subject of debate at the meeting.

DEVIZES TOWN COUNCIL
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A person may also be permitted to make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to local government, or to the Council's administration or upon a subject, which may be of general interest to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business.

Town Clerk