



Windlesham Parish Council

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MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF WINDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL
 Held on Tuesday 18th January 2022, at 7.00pm held at St Anne’s Church Centre, 43
 Church Road, Bagshot

| Bagshot Cllrs | | Lightwater Cllrs | | Windlesham Cllrs | |
|---------------|---|------------------|---|------------------|---|
| Bakar | A | Barnett | P | Goodman | P |
| Du Cann | P | Galliford | P | Hansen-Hjul | P |
| Gordon | P | Halovsky-Yu | A | Hardless | P |
| Manley | P | Harris | P | Stacey | P |
| Willgoss | P | Hartshorn | - | Sturt | P |
| White | P | Jennings-Evans | P | | |
| | | Malcaus Cooper | P | | |

In attendance: Jo Whitfield – Interim Clerk
 Tina Richardson – Windlesham Resident
 Emma McGrath – Surrey Heath Borough Council
 Graham Bullen – Chair of Windlesham Society

P – present A – apologies PA – part of the meeting - no information

Cllr Malcaus Cooper was in the Chair

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| | | Action |
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| C/21/114 | Apologies for absence Acceptable apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Halovsky-Yu, and Cllr Bakar | |
| C/21/115 | Declarations of interest No declarations were made. | |
| C/21/116 | Public question time Q1 from Tony Murphy - Resident: A POINT OF ORDER: Standing Order 7a states “a resolution shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion which requires written notice by at least 3 Cllrs to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with SO 9”. Today’s Agenda item 5 appears to be properly in compliance as a motion by the 3 named Cllrs. But, are agenda items 6 & 7 in compliance as the SO refers to a (singular) motion? They are by individual Cllrs and appear to have a relationship | |

with the 30th Nov resolution. The intention of the SO is to avoid revisiting resolutions except under the provisions as stated above.

Cllr Malcaus Cooper explained to those present at the meeting that the three items in question were standalone items with item 5 relating to levying a precept for 2022-2023 and item 6 and 7 considering the reallocation of finances from the current year (2021-2022) either through virements or the repurposing of earmarked reserves. In line with Standing Orders, items 6 and 7 have not been previously discussed and therefore do not require three Cllrs to write to the Clerk.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

(Agenda item 3) according to the standard invitation to members of the public it also allows comment on any items on the agenda.

My question to the meeting on 30th Nov (essentially) referred to the level of reserves and called upon Council to raise a precept without increase due to the present national circumstances.

I am grateful to Interim Clerk (Jo) for information provided immediately following that meeting which illustrated that the reserve to be considered was greater than suggested in my question (just over £1 million not £835,000). This was factual information which added up. But in my view, it did not add up to an explanation for significant precept increase. Without benefit of the Minutes and based on witness reports, I understand that, by a narrow margin, Council resolved to increase the precept by a jaw dropping 62%

An alternative, more modest proposal, to increase by 5% was supported by the Windlesham Village Committee and others including senior members from the other villages

A member of the public wishing to comment, in advance of a debate and without benefit of the “additional information available”, is at some disadvantage.

Today’s substantive agenda item 5, “Final Budget & Precept Sign Off”, consists of a motion, by those senior members who supported the modest 5%, asking Council to review the November precept decision.

It is reasonable to suppose that out of consistency they will continue to support a modest increase and that this will be supported by the “additional information”.

Also, out of consistency I must assume that such a motion, by 3 mature well seasoned members representing all three villages, would be supported by my elected representatives on the Windlesham Committee.

I also note from the item 6 motion by Cllr Malcaus-Cooper that there is some expectation of surplus or excess reserves from current year which appears to be counter to a demand which may lead to even greater reserves at next year end.

In the circumstances and recognising we have a representative democracy I respectfully call upon Council, after proper consideration, to reverse the November resolution in favour of a more modest increase which recognises the real world and the expectations of your electorate.

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| C/21/117 | <p>Exclusion of the press and public.</p> <p>Agreed that the following items be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:</p> <p>There were no items for discussion.</p> <p><i>19:12 Cllr Barnett joined the meeting</i></p> | |
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| C/21/118 | <p>Final Budget and Precept Sign Off 2022-23</p> <p>Motion from Cllrs Goodman, Jennings-Evans and White – In light of additional information available, Council is asked to review the precept decision made at the November meeting.</p> <p>Members were presented with a report outlining the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22-23 confirmed tax base • Confirmed LCTS grant • Projected year end position • What happens to any surplus at year end • What happens to any deficit at year end • A breakdown of the reserves as of the 31st December 2021 • Internal Audit Feedback regarding the reserves • Information relating to the provisional local government finance settlement consultation 2022-2023, clause- 3.5 Council tax referendum principles for town and parish councils • 3 detailed budget options and a summary of their effect on the General Reserve and the Band D precept figure. • Balance sheet as at 31st December 2021 <p>Summary of Options Available</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="331 1330 1275 1935"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2021-2022 Precept</th> <th>2022-2023 Precept approved at Full Council 30.11.2021</th> <th colspan="2">Additional Options following Motion from 3 Councillors as per Standing Orders</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Band D equivalent Properties</th> <th>Option 1</th> <th>Option 3</th> <th>Option 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>58% Band D Precept Increase</td> <td>26% Band D Precept Increase</td> <td>Default 5% Band D Precept Increase</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Fund some budget lines from reserves or deficit budget</td> <td>Remove budget lines detailed in report.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band D precept</td> <td>£37.76</td> <td>£59.84</td> <td>£47.69</td> <td>£39.77</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Council Tax base</td> <td>8134.78</td> <td>8222.82</td> <td>8222.82</td> <td>8222.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total precept to be raised</td> <td>£307,148</td> <td>£492,085</td> <td>£392,085</td> <td>£327,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Members were asked to either:</p> | | 2021-2022 Precept | 2022-2023 Precept approved at Full Council 30.11.2021 | Additional Options following Motion from 3 Councillors as per Standing Orders | | | Band D equivalent Properties | Option 1 | Option 3 | Option 4 | | | 58% Band D Precept Increase | 26% Band D Precept Increase | Default 5% Band D Precept Increase | | | | Fund some budget lines from reserves or deficit budget | Remove budget lines detailed in report. | Band D precept | £37.76 | £59.84 | £47.69 | £39.77 | Council Tax base | 8134.78 | 8222.82 | 8222.82 | 8222.82 | Total precept to be raised | £307,148 | £492,085 | £392,085 | £327,000 | |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|--|--|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|---|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| | 2021-2022 Precept | 2022-2023 Precept approved at Full Council 30.11.2021 | Additional Options following Motion from 3 Councillors as per Standing Orders | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Band D equivalent Properties | Option 1 | Option 3 | Option 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 58% Band D Precept Increase | 26% Band D Precept Increase | Default 5% Band D Precept Increase | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Fund some budget lines from reserves or deficit budget | Remove budget lines detailed in report. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Band D precept | £37.76 | £59.84 | £47.69 | £39.77 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Council Tax base | 8134.78 | 8222.82 | 8222.82 | 8222.82 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total precept to be raised | £307,148 | £492,085 | £392,085 | £327,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

1. Decide which of the above budget/precept options they wished to formally agree for the year 2022-2023.

Or

2. Agree alternative amendments to any of the above scenarios and formally agree the amended alternative budget/ precept for the year 2022-23

Members were also reminded that the projected figures were only indicative and were either based on known costs, or are averages based on costs to date.

Following a robust discussion of the pros and cons of each option Cllr Jennings-Evans proposed and Cllr Goodman seconded that the Council move to a vote to accept the budget as presented (see Appendix A) and agree the precept at £327,000 which equates to a 5% increase (Band D equivalent) in precept for the year 22-23.

Prior to a vote being taken the Interim Clerk highlighted to Members that in agreeing the 5% Option they were agreeing the following:

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| New office building reserve | £20,000 (to be funded from Community Bus EMR) |
| Consultation budget removed | Members could decide to keep the Consultation budget and reduce the Grants (Open Maintenance and Section 137) by £3000 per village instead |
| Election budget line removed | Removed from the budget |
| Governance review budget line removed | Removed from the budget |
| Community Bus Earmarked Reserve | Transfer funds to Office Building EMR |

Effect on General Reserves

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| Balance in General Fund at 31.12.21 | £252K |
| 22-23 Deficit identified in 5% budget | £-94K |
| Transfer £20k from Community Bus Reserve to Pavilion Reserve (office portion) | £-20K £20K |
| Balance in General Fund | £158K |

An amendment to the motion was tabled.

Cllr Harris proposed, and Cllr Gordon seconded that the above motion be amended to allow Members to put all three budget options to the vote, in the following order: Option 1 58% increase, Option 2 26% increase and Option 3 5% increase.

Cllr Jennings-Evans requested a recorded vote which Cllr Stacey seconded.

Members moved to the vote on the amendment of the motion which failed with 7 In Favour and 8 Against.

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| Cllr Galliford | In Favour |
| Cllr Du Cann | Against |
| Cllr Manley | In Favour |
| Cllr Goodman | Against |
| Cllr Jennings-Evans | Against |
| Cllr White | Against |
| Cllr Gordon | In Favour |
| Cllr Harris | In Favour |
| Cllr Hansen-Hjul | Against |
| Cllr Sturt | Against |
| Cllr Stacey | Against |
| Cllr Hardless | Against |
| Cllr Barnett | In Favour |
| Cllr Willgoss | In Favour |
| Cllr Malcaus Cooper | In Favour |

Members proceeded to vote on the original proposal to agree the 5% precept increase and budget provided and the vote was carried with 8 in favour, 6 Against and 1 Abstention.

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| Cllr Galliford | Against |
| Cllr Du Cann | In Favour |
| Cllr Manley | Abstained |
| Cllr Goodman | In Favour |
| Cllr Jennings-Evans | In Favour |
| Cllr White | In Favour |
| Cllr Gordon | Against |
| Cllr Harris | Against |
| Cllr Hansen-Hjul | In Favour |
| Cllr Sturt | In Favour |
| Cllr Stacey | In Favour |
| Cllr Hardless | In Favour |
| Cllr Barnett | Against |
| Cllr Willgoss | Against |
| Cllr Malcaus Cooper | Against |

It was resolved to accept the budget as presented and agree the precept at £327,000 which equates to a 5% increase (Band D equivalent) in precept for the year 22-23.

Cllr Malcaus Cooper requested that it be minuted that in her opinion the Council is failing its residents and it does not sit comfortably with her.

Cllr Goodman requested that it be minuted that in his opinion the Council had made the right decision for residents and that moving forward Council should focus on writing a business plan which will deliver resident's priorities, along with a reserve policy; both of which will inform next year's budget. Cllr Sturt concurred.

NB: The above percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number and following the meeting SHBC informed WPC that the percentage increase will be reported to one decimal place on the Council tax bills, reflecting an increase of 5.3%

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| <p>C/21/119</p> | <p>Motion from Cllr Malcaus Cooper to consider earmarking any surplus or excess reserves from 2021/22 for the purchase/lease of new allotments?</p> <p>Following a working party review of the land registry documentation, it has been established that the current allotment site is actually leasehold with the lease due to expire in August 2037. Members were asked to note that there is a break clause within the lease which enables the landlord to resume possession in 2027 (see image below).</p> <p>In light of the information above and given that the provision of Allotments is a statutory duty of Council, Cllr Malcaus Cooper requested Members consider transferring any surplus in the budget for 2021/22 or any excess in reserves to an earmarked reserve for purchase/lease of land for the allotments.</p> <p>4. GENERAL PROVISIONS</p> <p>PROVIDED ALWAYS that it is expressly agreed as follows:-</p> <p>1. The Landlord shall be entitled to determine the Term and to resume possession of the Property on 31 December 2017 or 31 December 2027 providing the following conditions are satisfied:-</p> <p>(a) The Landlord has served not less than two years' notice in writing on or before 31 December 2015 or 31 December 2025 that this Lease is to determine and that he requires possession</p> <p>(b) At the date of service of the notice the Local Planning Authority for the area in which the Property is situated has granted planning permission for commercial or residential development of the Property ("development" to be defined as in Section 55(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)</p> <p>Members discussed the Council's position and Cllr Goodman suggested that Council contact the current owners of the land to discuss the Councils position. It was resolved that the Clerk in conjunction with Cllr Goodman would follow this up.</p> <p>Cllr Jennings-Evans proposed, Cllr Hardless seconded, to amend the above motion as follows: 'to consider earmarking any surplus or excess reserves from 2021/22 for the reallocation to primary projects of the Council' A vote was taken and was agreed unanimously.</p> | <p>Interim Clerk & Cllr Goodman</p> |
| <p>C/21/120</p> | <p>Motion from Cllr Gordon to consider earmarking funds to support events celebrating the Queens Platinum Jubilee in June of this year.</p> <p>Cllr Gordon proposed that Council <i>earmark £3k per village to host an event to mark the Platinum Jubilee.</i></p> <p><i>It was suggested that each village light a beacon and host a party involving local groups, schools, societies and local businesses to showcase what they do.</i></p> | |

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| | <p><i>Cllr Gordon asked each village committee to get involved in the event and not just fund it, thereby demonstrating an active part in the community</i></p> <p>Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The village event grant was not adopted by Windlesham or Lightwater this year and due to limited funds Bagshot Committee set a limit of £750. • Members are to note that currently the Council has insufficient administrative resource to host these events considering we are approaching the financial year end and have plans to hold a larger than normal Chairman’s Reception this year, as well as the planned Annual Parish Meeting. • Will £3000 per village be sufficient? • The final budget/precept decision will determine if there is sufficient funding available for this project. <p>Recommendation</p> <p>It is recommended that Members consider documenting a detailed project plan including anticipated costs and resources, before any firm commitment is made to host these events.</p> <p>Additionally, dependant on the outcome of budget/precept discussions, it may be necessary to fund this project from individual village reserves.</p> <p>Members were asked to decide:</p> <p>a) If they would like to host village events and if so, which Councillors will be responsible for the organisation of these events.</p> <p>or</p> <p>b) If they wish to earmark funds to support events led by community groups</p> <p>and finally</p> <p>c) If Members wish to proceed with this project, what level of funding would they like to set aside and how do they wish to fund it?</p> <p>Members resolved unanimously for the Parish to purchase 3 beacons (one for each village) and that each village will allocate £3,000 from their village reserves to contribute towards a community led Platinum Jubilee Event.</p> <p>It was noted that the Parish council will require a licence to light the beacons.</p> | The Clerk |
| C/21/121 | <p>Exclusion of the press and public. Agreed that the following items be dealt with after the public, including the press, have been excluded under S1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:</p> <p>There were not items to be discussed</p> | |
| | <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:40</p> | |