

## **HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of the **MEETING** of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
Held on **10 DECEMBER 2012**

**PRESENT:** Chair: Councillor Ve Amos  
Vice-Chair: -

Councillors: As per Council Meeting plus Councillor Helen Brown

Officers: R N Barnes, Clerk & Financial Officer

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

As per Council Meeting

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Councillor Ve Amos, Ralph Small and John Walker declared an interest in the Section 137 Grant Application submitted by Mancot Village Hall.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 12 November 2012 be received as a true record and that they be signed by the Chair.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

There were none.

### **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:**

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Accounts for Payment in the sum of £32,745.20 be approved.

### **CLERK & FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT:**

The following matters were reported:-

(a) The Council's contributions to the Central Administration and Direct Maintenance Fund for the month would be reported at the January meeting.

(b) Other relevant matters.

(i) Section 137 Grant Application – Mancot Village Hall

The Committee was advised that the application referred to at the Committee's November meeting had been received. Mancot Village Hall was seeking assistance towards a range of events it was holding which would cost £350. The Village Hall Committee was seeking a grant of £200 towards the costs. It was confirmed that a

constitution and accounts had been received with the application, details of which were disclosed to the Committee.

IT WAS RESOLVED: by virtue of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 to award a grant of £200 to Mancot Village Hall.

(ii) Redecoration of Council Chamber

IT WAS RESOLVED: to confirm the proposal for the redecoration of the Council Chamber at a cost of £936 or £1,121 dependant upon the requirement of a second coat of emulsion on the upper walls and ceiling.

**BUDGET 2013/2014:**

The Clerk referred to the report attached to the agenda which set out the Council's expenditure proposals for 2013/2014 in order to enable the Council to agree its budget and thereby its Precept demand.

**2012/2013:**

He said that as could be seen from the Budget and Precept Analysis, the Council was predicted to bring forward balances of £152,100 to 1 April 2013. However, of this £20,000 was committed to the future improvement or replacement of Level Road Community Centre

Expenditure during the year was predicted to be £348,493 and income £311,194.

**2013/2014:**

Expenditure in 2013/2014 was proposed to be £371,803 this included the gross cost of the Joint Services towards which an income of £94,026 would be received, giving a net expenditure figure of £277,777. This figure included the £20,000 provision for the construction of a replacement Community Centre at Level Road, although it was considered unlikely that the contribution would be required in 2013/2014, as no firm proposals were currently in place and £16,000 in the Holding Account. Expenditure should therefore be £241,777.

Expenditure proposals for 2013/2014 had been set in accordance with current trends, inflation and Council decisions.

- **Joint Services:**

A full explanation of spending proposals would be submitted to the Joint Services Committee on which the Council had five representatives. Expenditure was proposed to increase from £211,239 to £217,636, this Council's contribution therefore increasing from £120,953 to £124,710. The principal reason for this was the proposal to replace the vehicle mounted platform hoist.

- **General:**

This budget heading was proposed to decrease from a provision of £21,338 to £11,318. The reason for this was the sum of £12,500 which was included for the May 2012 Council elections has been reduced to £2,500.

- **Section 137:**

Expenditure on Section 137 items was proposed to increase from £27,400 to £28,956 principally due to additional provision being made to continue supporting the Summer Play Schemes at the 5 sites in the Council's area, albeit for a 3 week rather than a 5 week period as in the past. An allocation of £5,000 had again been included in the budget for the improvement of the Council's illuminations, this would enable new style column displays at all the Council's Christmas lighting locations.

- **Open Spaces:**

A budget provision of £24,778 was proposed for Open Spaces in 2013/2014. This would enable the Council to support its decision to allocate £20,000 towards the Match Funding of play equipment at Mancot and Aston Park.

- **Highway/Verges:**

Expenditure was proposed to increase by £550 to £22,815. This related solely to costs appertaining to the Council's litter collection service.

- **Public Lighting**

The budget provision had been increased from £12,300 to £19,300 wholly due to energy costs.

- **Allotments:**

A further allocation of £10,000 had been included for 2013/2014. This would enable the acquisition of the sheds and perimeter fencing. It had been hoped to meet the cost of the fencing out of the current year's budget but this wouldn't be possible because of the monies spent on the Contaminated Land Assessment exercise which was required by the Planning Department. The Budget allowed for income of £2,000 from allotment holders. Income to this level over the 20 year lease would match the Council's Capital costs in the establishment of the site

- **Holding Account:**

The level in the Holding Account was proposed to remain at £36,000, £20,000 of which related to monies held for the future replacement of the Level Road Community Centre.

- **Precept:**

It was proposed that the Council's Precept should rise from £210,000 to £225,000. The Council had over a number of years been deliberately reducing its balances. Since 2006/2007 balances had reduced from £214,500 to expected balances of £152,100 in March 2013.

As shown in the Budget and Precept Summary balances will further reduce to £105,337 by March 2014, even with a precept rise of £15,000. In reality the balances at 2014 were likely to be £141,337 as monies within the Holding Account were not expected to be used. However it was considered important that the Council should begin to slow down the rate of reduction and then stabilise its balances by setting neutral budgets in the future. To have achieved this in 2013/2014 would have required a precept of £235,763.

The report highlighted that if the proposed budget was approved at a precept level of £225,000 the Community Council element of the Council Tax Charge on an average Band D property would be £37.46. In 2012/2013 11 of the 34 Town and Community Councils had higher charges, rising to £50.58.

Furthermore in 2012/2013 Buckley Town Council which had the largest tax base in Flintshire with 6,114 properties, just 34 more than Hawarden Community Council which had the second largest, had a precept level of £270,987. Connah's Quay Town Council, with a Tax Base of 132 less than Hawarden Community Council had a precept of £276,538.

Members thanked the Clerk for the work he had undertaken in producing the proposed budget. Members confirmed that they were satisfied that the budget was in accordance with the Council's proposals for 2013/2014 and supported the aspiration of achieving neutral budgets in future years.

IT WAS RESOLVED:

(a) that the budget and precept as set out be approved.

(b) Flintshire County Council be advised that Hawarden Community Council's precept for 2013/2014 was £225,000.

**BANK RECONCILIATION:**

The bank reconciliation to 30 November, a copy of which was attached to the agenda. was received.

**MEMBERS INFORMATION ITEMS:**

There were none.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm