

CHOLSEY PARISH COUNCIL- BUDGET MEETING

MINUTES

Meeting	Wednesday 9 th December at 7:30pm in the Pavilion, Station Road, Cholsey.
Chair	Mr M Gray
Attendees	Mrs L Hamlyn, Mrs L Ivereigh, Mrs M Dyer-Lynch, Mrs V Bolt, Mr P Jenkins
Apologies	Mr P Ramsay, Mrs A Rowlands, Mrs M Kaposy

191	To hear questions or comments from members of the public (max 15 mins).
	<p>Mr Sheldon felt it would be helpful if Council provided him, and others interested in finances, with a full breakdown of charges prior to the meeting.</p> <p>He commented that allotment holders appear to make an excessive contribution to Council funds.</p> <p>Mr Sheldon also noted that the paths for the burial ground have deteriorated and this along with the current problems with moles indicate a need for continuing the existing level of funding. Regarding the expenditure for the Children's Centre Mr Sheldon commented that although he was in favour of providing assistance for children he felt that it was unusual, given the proposed level of expenditure, to not have more detailed proposals detailing the aims and objectives of the project.</p>

192	To receive Declarations of Interest for any agenda items
	Mr Gray advised that he is chair of the library committee and children's centre.

193	To consider and agree the proposed budget for 2016-17 as recommended by the Finance Committee
	<p>Mr Gray advised that the Finance Committee had met on 24th November to discuss the budget, the minutes of which had been provided to Council and which summarised their recommendations. Mr Gray suggested that their recommendation for each major category of expenditure be reviewed and agreed in turn.</p> <p>General Administration</p> <p>The Finance Committee recommended that the overall total expenditure for General Administration remain largely the same at £7630 for the year – an increase of £10 on the current budget. They proposed a small increase in the amount budgeted for annual subscriptions and memberships to allow for possible increases in subscription charges. They suggested that the amount set aside for professional fees was reduced by £500 although it was proposed that £2,000 should still be budgeted in case additional funds were required for CAGE. After discussion Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committees recommendations that the budget for General Administration for 2015-16 be set at £7630 Proposed Mr Gray, seconded Mr Jenkins, carried unanimously</p> <p>Accommodation</p> <p>The Finance Committee recommended that there should be no increase to the accommodation budget for 2016-17 which would remain the same as the current budget at £2000 Proposed Mr Gray, seconded Mrs Ivereigh, carried unanimously</p> <p>Burial Ground</p> <p>The Finance Committee recommended a small increase to the expenditure budget from £7102 (current year) to £7327 to allow for possible annual uplift in the cost of waste removal, pest control and grass cutting services. They suggested that budgeted income figure be increased by £500 from £8250 to £8750 to reflect the previous years increase in actual income from fees. Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committees recommendations, seconded Mrs Bolt, carried unanimously.</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>The Finance Committee recommended that the budget for staff for 2016-17 be reduced from the current budget of £48,102 to £43,063. Mr Gray advised that this was due to the removal of the Children's Worker, Street Cleaner and related costs from the budget. Mr Gray advised that the role of Children's Worker would now be absorbed into the proposed Children Centre. The proposed budget for staff included the increase in salaries of £1,000 for the Clerk and for all other staff of 1.5% as recommended by the Personnel Working Group and agreed by Council at their meeting on 4th November.</p>

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Some income was expected in the form of a contribution to the Older Persons Worker salary and expenses from Cholsey Day Centre.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mrs Ivereigh, **carried** unanimously

Office

The Finance Committee recommended a small rise in the expenditure budget for the Office from £2180 to £2220 to reflect an actual increase in phone and broadband charges. The small budget for maintenance of equipment had been removed as it was felt that this was adequately covered by the IT support budget and contingency budget.

Mrs Hamlyn proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mrs Bolt, **carried** unanimously.

Allotments

The Finance Committee recommended total expenditure remained the same at £850. They proposed that budgeted income should be increased to £1600 from £1200 in expectation of the new allotments at Cholsey Meadows being available for residents to rent in 2016.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mrs Dyer-Lynch, **carried** unanimously.

Open Spaces

The Finance Committee recommended that the proposed total expenditure for Open Spaces be reduced from the current budget of £8945 to £7510 for 2016-17, although small increases were proposed to the budgets for grass cutting and dog bin emptying to allow for possible annual increases in the cost of those services. A reduction in the budget for Tree/Hedge maintenance was proposed to reflect the requirements of the planned maintenance schedule for trees.

The Finance Committee proposed that the budgeted income figure should remain the same.

After discussion Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mrs Dyer-Lynch, **carried** unanimously.

Sundries

The Finance Committee proposed that the total expenditure on Sundries be reduced from £5,200 to £4,940 by removing election costs from the budget. It was felt that in the very unlikely event of an election in the coming financial year the cost could be met from reserves. The Committee also proposed that the budget for the library worker support grant be increased by 1.5% in line with the rises given to Parish Council staff.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation's, seconded Mrs Hamlyn, **carried** unanimously.

Summer Play Scheme

The Finance Committee recommended that the budget for income £700 and expenditure £800 for the Summer Play Scheme "Action in the Park" stay the same for 2016-17. Mr Gray advised that income is mainly in the form of grants for the event made by various organisations.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation's, seconded Mr Jenkins, **carried** unanimously.

Defibrillator

Although this was not budgeted for it appeared in the draft budget due actual income and expenditure in the previous years.

Children's Centre

Following Council's agreement in principle to open a Children's Centre in Cholsey at their meeting on 4th November this had been included in the budget. The Finance Committee proposed that an expenditure budget of £15,006 be set in order to cover the cost of room rental in year 1 (£500), a contribution of £250 towards running costs and annual staff costs of £6,336 for a part-time manager and £7,920 for a part-time support worker.

With a degree of pride Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mr Jenkins, **carried** unanimously.

New Pavilion

The Finance Committee recommended the budget for the new pavilion remain the same at £27,753 to cover the cost of mortgage payments.

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Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendations, seconded Mrs Bolt **carried** unanimously.

Precept

The total expenditure to provide services in 2016-17 was anticipated to be £119,099. Income was expected to be £13,405. With the retention of the CTRS Grant by SODC this left the remaining £105,694 of costs to be covered by the precept.

Mr Gray advised that if the precept were to remain the same at 66.56p for a band "D" household it would result in a deficit of just over £7,500. Therefore the Finance Committee had discussed the options of raising the precept by 3% which would result in a £2.00 per annum increase for householders to £68.56p per band "D" household or by 5% which would result in a £3.33 per annum increase for householders to £69.89p per band "D" household. The Finance Committee had concluded that the recommendation to Council should be for the precept should rise by £3.33 per annum per band "D" household to £69.89. Although this would reduce the deficit it would not eliminate it entirely and it was recommended that the balance of the deficit should be met from reserves.

After discussion Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation to increase the precept by 5% and meet the remaining deficit from reserves, seconded Mr Jenkins, **carried** unanimously.

Mr Gray advised that the Finance Committee had also recommended that a further £1,000 contribution towards provision of a replacement for the dial-a-ride service (due is to be scrapped by OCC) and a contribution to the proposed skate ramp should also be made from reserves. Mr Gray advised that these items will be brought to Council to be agreed individually as and when the occasion arises. New paths for the burial ground will need to be provided in the coming year, a ring-fenced figure already exists in Council's reserves to meet this need.

195 To consider and agree the proposed Council charges for 2016-17 as recommended by the Finance Committee

Burial Ground charges

Details of burial ground charges from a number of local villages and towns had been obtained. The Finance Committee had considered Cholsey's fees in relation to these and recommended that fees for burials and interments should be increased by 10%, except for the fee for ashes interment which should be increased to £75. Fees for headstones should be increased from £63 to £80, cremation tablets from £30 to £50, fees for additional inscriptions and wooden crosses from £24 to £30.

It was recommended that the fee multiplier for non-residents, currently set at 2.5 times that of the fees charged to residents, should remain the same.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation, seconded Mr Jenkins **carried** unanimously.

Street Vendor Charges

The Finance Committee recommended that the street vendor pitch charges should be increased by approximately 5% from £10.25 per visit to £10.75.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation, seconded Mrs Dyer-Lynch **carried** unanimously.

Recreation Ground Charges

The Finance Committee recommended that charges in relation to the Recreation Ground should remain the same fro 2016-17.

Mr Gray proposed Council accept the Finance Committee's recommendation, seconded Mrs Dyer-Lynch **carried** unanimously.

196 AOB

There was no further business.