

KEYNSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on Tuesday
7 January 2020 at 6pm in the Key Centre, Charlton Road, Keynsham

PRESENT: Councillors C Fricker, A Greenfield, H MacFie (Chair) and
B Simmons

IN ATTENDANCE: Cheryl Scott – Town Clerk, Cllr A Halliday

93. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

To receive apologies for absence from Cllrs Cooper and Crouch.

94. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS

All Councillors present at the meeting (with the exception of Cllr Greenfield) had a pecuniary interest as taxpayers living in Keynsham.

The Clerk reminded all Councillors that the Standing Orders granted a dispensation to all Councillors to discuss the budget//precept.

95. RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2019 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

96. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cllr Halliday addressed his concerns to the meeting about the issues for residents attempting to cross Charlton Road to the bus stop near Lays Farm. He felt that a zebra crossing or similar should be installed and wondered whether this would be an appropriate use of CIL money. Cllr Simmons agreed to find out how far up the list the proposed crossing was with B&NES. The Committee asked the matter be referred to Town Council.

97. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY- REVIEW OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE/COMMITMENTS

(a) The Committee considered a report from the Clerk that detailed the published reports from both the Town Council and B&NES on Community Infrastructure Levy payments received and committed/spent for the last 3 years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

(b) The Town Council had received a total of £265,985.80 CIL and committed/spent £91,019.21, leaving a balance of uncommitted CIL of £174,966.59. The previous year the Finance Committee had recommended to Council that £10k of CIL be set aside each year for projects suggested by the community and an Annual call made for suggestions at the Annual Town meeting. The Clerk advised this has not happened last April owing to the office disruption/relocation occurring at the time.

RECOMMENDATION

That £10k be allocated per year for the term of this Council towards suggested community infrastructure projects and an announcement made at the Annual Town meeting.

(c) The Committee went on to consider the B&NES reports which showed that B&NES had received £1.5m of CIL from Keynsham developments, (excluding the amount passed to the Town Council) and had only committed/spent £200,000 on the High Street and Transport improvements. The Committee expressed concern that there was no legal requirement for B&NES to spend the CIL money collected from Keynsham development on projects within Keynsham. Concern was also expressed at the amount of CIL B&NES had already committed to Bath projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the matter should be debated at Full Council
- (ii) That the Town Council should determine the contents of a letter to be written to B&NES (CEO and Leader of the Council) expressing concern on the apportionment of CIL expenditure (or lack of) to the area from which it was collected.

98. BUDGET 2020-2021

The ONLY amendment proposed by the RFO was the allocation of an extra £10k of CIL expenditure for community-led projects as per the recommendation made for the previous item.

RECOMMENDATION

To approve the Budget for 2020-2021 as presented with forecast expenditure of £870,173 and forecast income of £144,745.

99. PRECEPT

(a) The RFO presented the report. The Tax Base notification from B&NES has risen from 6369.57. to 6527.12 for 2020/21, representing an increase of approximately 158 Band D-equivalent (BDE) properties, (an increase of 2.47%). The Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) 12-month inflation rate was 1.5% in November 2019, unchanged from October 2019

(b) The proposed Expenditure of £870,173 was to be financed by forecast income of £144,745. However the RFO advised the Committee that this income figure included a forecast £55,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which could not be used to support revenue expenditure and had to be transferred to an EMR at the end of the financial year. Because of this, the available income to support expenditure was reduced to £89,745. It was proposed to drawdown ear marked reserves of £172,241 to support expenditure which left a balance to fund from Precept (and General Reserves if deemed necessary) of £870,173 - £89,745 - £172,241 = £608,188.

(c) The financial risk assessment had indicated the minimum level of General Reserves should be retained at £356,700. The Committee considered a series of options in respect of % increase in council tax per householder, showing the

effect this would have on General Reserves. In order to balance the budget without utilising any General Reserves this would equate to a precept income of £608,000 corresponding to a 2% increase in council tax per householder. The Committee considered that the 2% increase made sense of the figures however they were also mindful of the suggestion that, given the 1.5% inflation rate, a 1.5% increase may be more prudent.

- (d) It was decided that both options be recommended to the Council and that Cllr MacFie would speak to the 1.5% proposal and Cllr Simmons would speak to the 2% proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Town Council consider either a 1.5% or 2% increase in Council Tax.

100. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

REOLVED:

To note that the date of the next meeting is Tuesday 10 March at 6pm.

The meeting finished at 19.02

SIGNED:..... (Chairman) Dated: