

**MINUTES OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19
NOVEMBER 2013 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD
COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr M North, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Bernard Briars
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk
Derek Kemp - DCK Beavers
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant
Sam Vernon – Biggleswade Chronicle
Members of the public – 3

Also present: Cllrs Mrs J and D Lawrence

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr R Skinner, Cllr G Wilson and Cllr S Watkins.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none declared
- (b) Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – non declared

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and approved the minutes of the Finance & General Purpose meeting held on 16 July 2013.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- a. From the Finance & General Purpose meeting held on 16 July 2013 – Item 6b – Cllr M North said that this item has been approved by full Council.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. Council Tax Support Grant (CTS Grant)

Correspondence has been received from CBC regarding the CTS Grant for 2014/15. The Government has issued a provisional Settlement for 2014/15. This did not separately identify any amount for CTS Grant and overall the Settlement amount for CBC was £5.438m, or 7.7%, lower than that for 2013/14.

Since the publication of the provisional Settlement, the June Spending Review outlined a further 1% cut to Local Government funding. There are also other changes to funding currently being discussed, the impact of which is not yet known, but which may also be adverse for CBC.

Following helpful feedback on the Precept Request forms, the format of these has been revised and should be circulated to Town Council during November. The revised format has been designed to make as explicit as possible the full effect on Council Tax that Town Councils proposed precept would have.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council make no comment at this time.

b. Budgets

Members considered budgets for 2013/2014.

Cllr M North advised Members that Town Council may have to set the Precept at 8.49% increase, due to the reduced grant from CBC.

CBC has not met the target to provide the Tax Base figures.

There will be an F&GP meeting on 21 January to set the Precept and take to Council on 28 January, so the increase may change from 8.49%.

c. Financial Risk Assessment and Review

Members considered and reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment.

A copy was attached to the agenda.

Rob McGregor said that the Internal Auditor is satisfied.

Derek Kemp advised Members that Town Council needs to carry out a full Risk Assessment every year, prior to 31 March.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council accept the Financial Risk Assessment and Review.

7. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

There were no items discussed during the public open session.