

**MINUTES OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2015**  
**AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:**

Cllr M North (Chairman)  
Cllr D Albone  
Cllr Mrs H Ramsay  
Cllr D Strachan  
Cllr M Foster

Mr R McGregor, Town Clerk, Biggleswade Town Council  
Mr D Kemp (Accounting Solutions)  
Mrs J Durn, Minute Taker, Biggleswade Town Council

Also present: Cllr G Wilson, Cllr F Foster  
MOP x 1

**1. APOLOGIES**

Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr T Woodward

**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 – none declared

**3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items discussed during the public open session.

**4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Members received and approved the Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**Page 3, Item 6c, Budgets:** The Town Clerk confirmed that the **RECOMMENDATION** for a 1.98% increase in Band D was presented, and approved, by Council.

**6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**a. Members were asked to consider budgets for 2016-2017:**

Mr D Kemp, (Accounting Solutions), gave an overview of the budgets presented:

There are no recommendations as to capital reserve. It would obviously be very easy to just pluck a figure out of the air, but in terms of growth BTC is now a vastly different Town Council compared to 3 or even 10 years ago. Mr Kemp suggested that Council develop a 4/5 year Business Plan to include all future plans. Using estimated costs, the Plan will create a medium term financial strategy, which when divided by 5 will tell the Council the figure needed to be included for Capital.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay proposed updating the capital increase to 70K, and also holding a meeting with a single item agenda and possibly a presentation, in order to discuss the Business Plan before the next F&GP. This was seconded by Cllr D Strachan.

The Chairman noted these suggestions, but felt it would probably be better to leave this until January 2016 when we have the proper figures before us. Derek Kemp was asked to bear these suggested figures in mind before preparing figures for January.

The next F&GP Agenda will include an item concerning "Rolling Business Plan". It was suggested that we invite a representative from a company experienced in this field, in order to talk us through organizing a project of this type and give us a starting point.

Members asked if these budgets will be going to individual committees such as Public Land & Open Spaces (PLOS) as there are plans for their future requirements that may have considerable impact on the budgets. There may also be other ideas that Council is not currently aware of, and these should also be included.

The Chairman asked Members to present accurate proposals for consideration at the next F&GP on 12<sup>th</sup> January. Changes can then be included in the financial proposal.

**b. Financial Risk Assessment and Review:**

Mr Kemp informed the Members that the Council is under obligation to consider and review the financial risk assessment.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council approve the Financial Risk Assessment.

**c. Financial Regulations:**

The Financial Regulations have been amended to take account of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

The changes to the Financial Regulations are on page 14, item 1, and highlighted in red.

Members are asked to recommend to Town Council that the amended Financial Regulations are adopted.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council adopt the amended Financial Regulations.

**7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There are no items for information

**8. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions.

MOP queried the fact that there appeared to be no staff costs against the budget in relation to the Orchard Community Centre.

Mr Kemp said that provision has been made for administration staff, but this has not been shown as a direct charge against the Community Centre.