



WETHERBY TOWN COUNCIL BUDGETS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: Thursday 8th February 2024

Time: 7pm

Location: Wetherby Town Council Offices, Wetherby Town Hall, LS22 6NE

Present: Councillors Connor Mulhall, Neil O'Byrne and Dawn Payne (Mayor of Wetherby)

In attendance: Iona Taylor, Town Clerk and RFO (via Teams video link).

*In the absence of Councillor Newcombe it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Mulhall should chair this meeting.*

1. Apologies.

It was **AGREED** that apologies be received and reasons for absence accepted from Councillor Newcombe.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda and requests for dispensations – none.

3. 2024/25 Budget proposals.

The meeting considered the draft budget proposals, scheduled for presentation at the Full Council meeting on 13th February 2024.

The draft budget had been drawn up to take account of the current rate of inflation which the Office of National Statistics indicated as being 4.2% in December 2023 and included:

- Continuing with the existing ground maintenance arrangements whilst a fit-for-purpose tender is drawn up for future financial years.
- A new service provider for H&S and HR advice needs to be identified at the end of the contract with ELAS.
- Provision has been made for further works to the Church on the Corner building, reinspection of memorials and instigating further works to boundary walls in the Hallfield Lane cemetery.
- Consideration is to be given at the next full council meeting to supplementing the existing small grants scheme budget through bank interest income.

Members examined the budget on a line-by-line basis and agreed recommendations, including the following points, to ensure that there is no increase in the precept for the 2024/25 period:

- That the capital improvements grant to Wetherby Town Hall be reduced by £10,000, with the proviso that £10,000 of CIL funding be used for this purpose instead.
- £5,459 be included to cover half the costs of a further by-election, or to begin replenishing reserves for the next ordinary election in 2027. It was noted that the council's ear-marked reserves for elections will be reduced to nil after paying for the by-election taking place today and if another poll is held during the 2024/25 then the remaining costs would be taking from the council's reserves.
- Underspend on the Communications & Events Officer position from the 2023/24 financial year be ear-marked and used to fund an increase in Welcome to Wetherby activities in the 2024/25 period.
- There be no provision to increase the planning contingency fund in the 2024/25 period.
- Provision for climate emergency projects being included in other budget lines following cessation of committee.
- An assumption that the flower beds in the Garden of Rest and Bridgefoot will be revamped, to improve biodiversity opportunities, in the first half of the financial year. Whilst there will be initial costs for this project, the ongoing costs of bedding plants will be reduced and this is reflected in the budget.



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4. Next meeting.

The next meeting of the Budgets & Governance Committee will be held at 5.30pm on Tuesday 13th February in Wetherby Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Iona Taylor, Town Clerk.