

EARL SHILTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES of the FINANCE & POLICY WORKING PARTY MEETING

Held at 7.00 p.m. on

Monday 11 January 2021

By remote means using the remote internet means utilising the Zoom.us software application platform.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllrs B Granger (Chairman), R Allen, Mrs CM Coe, R Hills and K Lapsley.

In attendance: Cllr ME Leman as observer.
Town Clerk Mr ME Jackson.
Office Clerk Mrs C Houghton.
Members of public – nil.

1. *Chairman's welcome and opening remarks.*

The Chairman welcomed members and proceeded directly to the agenda.
Noted and received.

2. *To receive apologies for member absence. **None.***
3. *Declarations of interests. To receive disclosures of member's interests, i.e. the existence and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this agenda. **None.***
4. *To receive and approve as a true record, the minutes of the Finance & Policy Working Party meeting held on 02 November 2020.*

Resolved: to accept, as tabled, the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Policy Working Party on the 02 November 2020, circulated to members before this meeting; as a true record of proceedings.

5. *Interim Internal Audit Report for the period 01 Apr 20 to 30 Sep 20 inclusive.*

Members had received the report prior to the meeting in both electronic and hard copy formats. Overall, members agreed the report shows the finances and governance of the Council to be in a satisfactory state over the half year period. Cllr Allen raised a question about the 'medium' risk level applied to the Town Clerk being *under* (task) *time* pressure. Is there anything that could be done to reduce the task time pressure? The Town Clerk replied that he felt his job, whilst busy and demanding, he was more than fully supported by his colleagues despite the strictures of the COVID19 pandemic. Additionally, the Clerk is grateful for the understanding and support of the ESTC Chairman and Members also.

Noted and received.

6. *Precept – to review the Financial Year (FY) 2021/22 draft precept and supporting working papers so as to recommend to Full Council the legal precept to be set and notified to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council as the relevant principal authority.*

The Town Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) was invited to outline and explain his evidence based spreadsheets and other supporting documents to present the precept model included in member agenda packs. One point of interest was that despite seemingly a high rate of house building in the Town there has only been a negligible increase in the 'tax base calculator' notified by the Borough Accountant. ESTC look forward to noting the new build house numbers being included in next year' tax base.

The RFO model suggested an overall absolute increase in the precept of £5.3k which incorporates fully the requested increases from the LPCOS Cttee for tree care and machinery repair or maintenance. After some debate on the merits and virtue of not increasing the precept for the next financial year or likewise increasing it by 1.9%; two proposed motions were put forward. Firstly, for no increase in the precept and secondly for a £5.3k increase.

Resolved: to recommend to Full Council a 'no change' precept of £279,047 for the financial year 2021/22. This non-inflation setting is strictly to be for one year only and the £5.3k is to come from General Reserves to achieve the required balanced budget.

The meeting closed at 8.17 p.m. with the Chairman thanking members for their attendance and contributions.