

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

Held at 6.00 p.m. on

Monday 08 January 2020

At 21, Wood St, Earl Shilton, LE9 7NE.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllrs Mrs CM Coe, (Chairman), R Allen, B Granger and
K Lapsley.
In attendance: Town Clerk – Mr ME Jackson. Members of public – nil.

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

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, wished everyone a happy New Year and proceeded to the agenda without further comment.

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 22 October 2019.*
Resolved: to accept, as tabled, the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Policy Working Party on the 22 October 2019, circulated to members before this meeting; as a true record of proceedings.
5. *To decide recommendations to Full Council for the Financial Year (FY) 2020/21 legally required precept (budget) including:*

- a. *The HBBC Accountant's Precept calling letter and percentage model.*

The Clerk and Members remarked on how little the 'tax base' had increased this year as the perception was that quite a larger number of dwellings had been or will be completed and occupied before the end of the current financial year. There followed a short discussion of what factors affect the tax base calculation, e.g. those dwellings with single occupancy may reduce the figure to show a decimal fraction as in the case of the latest tax base of **3,174.4**. The Clerk presented an explanation of his precept (increase) model that showed, because of the rise in the tax base, that ESTC could increase the precept by £2,023 without imposing any increase on current tax payers simply because more Council tax payers living in the Town will now be sharing the overall burden.

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Chairman's Signature/Initials



The Clerk explained the precept model's example percentage increase rows showing a range of several increases from 2% to 20%. In line with local

government policy over the last 5 or so years a 1.99% was included in the model that would, if adopted, result in an annual precept of **£279,047** up by **£7,468** gross but only a net figure of **£5,445** due to the rise in the tax base. As a benchmark, this would increase a Band D (4 bed detached house) householder's ESTC element of council tax by **£1.72 per annum**.

b. *The staff cost model – version 17 Dec 19.*

The Staff Cost Model represents the change in appointees in the Groundcare Team, increases in staff Scale Points (increments) as recommended by resolution of the Staffing Cttee and a 3% cost of living addition for all staff bearing in mind local government unions have asked for a 10% pay rise with effect from 01 Apr 20. The National Joint Council (NJC = employers) have yet to make an offer as such and are unlikely to do so before the precept must, by law, be decided. In recent years the staff pay rise has been pegged at 2%.

c. *The full A3 precept spreadsheet with past FY, a forecast outturn for the current FY and a model for FY 2020/21.*

Members before the meeting were given an A3 spreadsheet showing historical data, current year budget, spend to date and forecast of outturn data plus a model for the next year. The Clerk and members then went through the model line by line discussing each block and item in turn.

d. *Other relevant data documents. None.*

Resolved: to recommend to Full Council the setting of a precept of £279,047 for the Financial Year 2020/21 which represents a 1.99% increase in the Town Council element of a resident's Council Tax.

6. *Office move to the Library premises - to review the known shared costs and any related updated information.*

Members briefly discussed the £9.3k listed and agreed shared costs for the Library premises ESTC Office and Public Toilet installations. It followed that points were made and answered that this sum would be paid from the earmarked reserve for *The Premises Projects*, as will the cost of the conveyancing, Office Pod extension, furniture, fittings and removal costs. The Clerk informed members that this afternoon the ESTC solicitor has progressed the lease agreement almost to the point of signature of all parties.

Noted and received.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m. with the Chairman thanking members for their attendance and contributions.

