

HAMPTON IN ARDEN PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING

Held at

THE MEETING ROOM

On

WEDNESDAY 5TH JANUARY 2011

Present: Councillors: Mr C Bowen
Mr M Dove
Mr M. James
Mr G Juniper
Dr. G. Lewis (Chair)
Mrs A. Rolf

In Attendance Mrs H Wood
Mrs J Richardson

10/76 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Blomer.

10/77 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10/78 RISK ASSESSMENT

The meeting considered any changes to the Council's responsibilities in the last year. The Clerk confirmed that a new schedule had been created to include the Remembrance Parade and volunteers who were working at The Spinney. There has been no extra charge for the present year, but an increase of 5% has been included in the budget for next year.

It was agreed that alternative quotes for insurance should be considered to try and reduce the cost of the policy for future years.

10/79 2011/12 BUDGET SETTING

The Chair welcomed councillors to the meeting and introduced Julie Richardson who is to assume the duties of clerk to the council when Helen Wood leaves on 14th January, Julie was warmly welcomed.

The basis for the draft budget, circulated prior to the meeting, was reviewed together with explanatory notes and statement of reserves. These indicated that the precept had not been raised for several years, even though costs had been increasing, routine maintenance work was suffering. Therefore the proposed

budget recommended an increase to the precept of £2150, (9.7% or £2.30 a household).

Councillor Juniper objected to the proposed increase because of the impact on parishioners. He did not agree that there should be a budgetary allowance for maintenance work that SMBC might be unable to perform if council tax was cut. However other councillors felt it was important to make provision if SMBC's budget reductions meant that essential works in the village were not carried out.

The level of financial reserve was discussed in some detail. The general view of the meeting was that the contribution to reserves this year should remain at £7000 to reflect the future need to replace the car park surface and the play equipment. In addition the maintenance committee has recommended a tree survey of the large conifers on the village green to ensure public safety, some major tree work might need to be funded. Councillor Juniper felt the contribution to reserves could be reduced to £6,000.

10/80 ALTERNATIVE 2011/12 BUDGET PROPOSAL

In view of Councillor Juniper's concerns, The Chair put forward a proposal to accept the suggested figures subject to a reduction in the amount of money put into reserves to £6000 with a subsequent precept of £23,300: the motion was seconded by Councillor Juniper. Councillors voted by a show of hands resulting in an equality of votes. Further discussion took place, those opposing the motion presenting very cogent argument in favour of the original budget proposal. The Chair's casting vote was against the resolution.

10/81 2011/12 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Councillor Rolf proposed a resolution to accept the original budget as circulated to the parish council. This was seconded by the Chair. Councillors voted by a show of hands and the motion was carried by a majority. Councillor Juniper asked for his objection to this resolution to be minuted.

10/82 VOTE OF THANKS

As this was the last meeting for Helen Wood, the outgoing clerk, the Chair thanked her on behalf of the council for her excellent contribution to the successes of the parish council over the last 4 years. The Chair mentioned in particular Helen's contribution to publication of the Parish Plan and to gaining the Quality Council Status and also, in what high regard she was held by borough councillors and other clerks.

10/83 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on 19th January 2011

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.