

# Meriden Parish Council

*The Centre of England*

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

13th November 2017 @ 5.15pm Venue: The Pavilion

Present: Cllr R Weaver, Chair, Cllr M Lee, Cllr M Haque and Responsible Finance Officer Mrs Barbara Bland (BB).

### 1. Welcome & Apologies

Chair opened the meeting with no apologies for non-attendance received from Cllr M Nunn and Cllr Lynch-Smith.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017

The minutes of October's meeting were agreed as a true record and Members approved the minutes.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The minutes of the finance committee meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017 were approved, proposed by Cllr M Lee and seconded by Cllr Weaver.

#### 2.1 Matters Arising

Chair raised outstanding actions from last meeting being:-

- VAT – BB confirms refund claim to HMRC has been finalised and sent.
- Grant Thornton complaint – BB confirms complaint letter was written and sent to Jackie Bellard, Director, who on the 31<sup>st</sup> October advised via email receipt of letter, notifying her retirement and the matter has been referred to Mark Heap to conclude.
- 145 Other – BB confirmed that this summary budget heading was made up of 145/1 MSP reimbursement of core costs; 145/2 credit notes; 145/3 reimbursement of salary costs.

### 3. Budget 2018-19 Preparation, Scoping & Precept

RW advised that the first draft of budget preparation for new financial year had been completed by BB and circulated to Members for discussion and consideration. Accompanying the budget headings are budget assumptions for any increase or reduction in income and expenditure.

Discussion on percentage increase for precept offsetting proposed reduction in top up grant was measured but as yet SMBC had not advised of percentage taper for 2018-19. There is no capping of precept percentage increase but it is usual not to exceed 3%. Proposed budget headings were individually scrutinised. The highlights follow:-

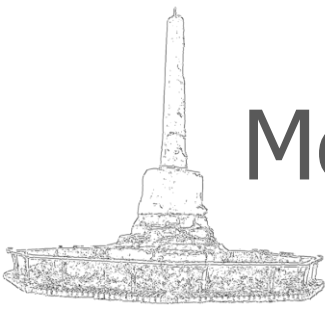
#### Income

- 3% increase to precept
- 45% estimated grant reduction
- £5,000 from reserves to add to restricted income for match funding Pool works
- £2,000 removed for NP (estimated technical support grant but not yet applied for)

**Clerk:** Barbara Bland, 55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

**T:** 01676 522474 **M:** 07767 162423 **E:** [barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com](mailto:barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com)

[www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk)



# Meriden Parish Council

*The Centre of England*

- Maximum tenancy of allotment rents for 2018-19 with a proposed £5 increase per plot. To be approved by full council to contribute to maintenance and new driveway costs.

## **Expenditure**

- 1000/4 amend NI costs – total too high for salary.
- Increased training budget for offer to Councillors and maintaining Clerks PDR qualification for LCAS quality status.
- Check with WALC re any home working allowance uplift.
- Undertake contractor reviews before end of calendar year value v. service.
- Increase of £1,550 S137 allocation to £3,050 (£50 additional flag raising re Red Ensign Day and £1,500 other for grant applications)
- Reduced £5,000 Legal/Professional due to Wright Hassall deferred expenditure now written off.
- £6,230 capital receipt Sports Park remains after £20,000 play area resurfacing works; this may provide funding for new wicket and camera for consideration.
- £25,000 contingency for 3 months included.

**ACTION:** RW/BB to undertake contractor reviews pre-Christmas break up. Adjustments to be made in line with above. Full Council consideration of grant reduction v. precept percentage increase, 3%, 3.5% or 4%? BB to seek advice from SMBC for indicative precept and confirmation of grant reduction, and timeline of SMBC communication of provisional tax base and support grant to PCs.

## **RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL 20-11-17**

- Approve the budget preparations to date;
- Consider percentage increase to precept v. reduction of support grant;

### **4. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of finance committee will be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 5.15 pm.

The meeting closed at 18.00.