

**Governance Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday 7th January 2025**

**MINUTES**

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| **1** | **Attendance :**  Cllr Martin Whiteley (Governance Chair), Cllr Amanda Miller, Cllr Peter Bulmer, Cllr John Salt, Cllr Krissie Myler  **In attendance (non-voting):** Keith Scargill (Chair of Council), Cllr Rob Herd, Cllr Sam Otter, Cllr Amanda Thomas, Sophia Samuel (Deputy clerk) Andrew Davies (Clerk) |
| **2** | **Open Forum:** No members of public present. |
| **3** | **Minutes and matters arising:** The minutes of the Governance meeting held on Tuesday 29th October 2024 where signed as correct by chair Cllr Whiteley. No matters arising. |
| **4** | **Declarations of interest:** No declarations of interest were declared |
| **5** | **To set Council Financial Budget for 2025/2026:**  The deputy clerk provided a financial budget sheet to all present. The deputy clerk outlined the spending for the first nine months of the financial year and provided a three month forecast for the remaining three months.  Cllr Whiteley suggested a plan to discuss budgeted expenditure for forthcoming financial year:  **Salaries**  Expenditure agreed.  **Council Costs**  Increased cost of clerks mobile telephone discussed. Cllr Salt proposed further staff mobiles be considered in future in particular for when staff are lone working.  **Facilities/Buildings**  Cllr Otter felt budget for line marking of VXCC should be increased to £2000.  **Open Spaces**  Cllr Otter requested further funds be allocated for tree work to be completed as per third year of tree survey.  Cllr Miller questioned expenditure on planters and requested this be reviewed by deputy clerk.  Cllr Salt questioned expenditure on litter picking and requested this be reviewed by deputy clerk.  Cllr Whiteley questioned expenditure on electricity at Old Laundry Corner. Information was provided that this is currently being reviewed with possibility of smart meter being installed.  **Communications and Events**  Cllr Herd requested a budget allowance for £1000 to establish a youth council.  **Allotments**  Due to recent higher than expected costs Cllr Whitely suggested a working group be set up to establish long term future of allotments.  **Projects**  No change to budgeted expenditure.  In summary it was agreed the new financial budget for 2025/26 be provisionally set at £118,600.00  **General Reserves**  The deputy clerk outlined that it was good practice to have fifty percent of the precept in general reserves for unforeseen circumstances. A discussion took place between councillors regarding general reserves held and possible unforeseen expenditure in next financial year. Cllr Thomas raised issue of employee national insurance rise which may affect budget as the council use contractors whose costs will rise. It was agreed that the general reserve should be at least fifty percent.  **Anticipated Income**  Cllr Miller questioned rent income from scout hut and was informed of long term rental agreement conditions by deputy clerk.  **Precept discussion**  Cllr Whiteley estimated that approximately £80,000 would be held in reserve at the end of the current financial year.  A general discussion took placed between councillors regarding any rise in precept especially due to recent rises in the cost of living.  Cllr Whiteley proposed a 3-5% precept rise in line with next year’s budget.  It was agreed that a provisional 5% precept rise be recommended to Council based on current information .  In summary it was recommended;  A proposed budget for 2025/26 of £118,600  A precept rise of 5%  *At this point Cllr Salt, Cllr Herd and deputy clerk left the meeting.* |
| **6** | **Training for staff and Councillors:**  The clerk outlined training required for a competent council.  It was unanimously agreed to authorise the clerk to join the Society of Local Council Clerks and to enrol on the Introduction to Local Council Administration Course.  It was agreed the Financial Introduction to Local Financial Administration be a future consideration for both clerk and deputy.  It was unanimously agreed that future CHALC training courses be shared with all councillors. Any councillors requesting training to be enrolled on appropriate courses.  **Resolved:**  Clerk to join SLCC and enrol on ILCA course.  Councillors to submit request to, and be enrolled on, relevant training courses by clerk. |
| **7** | **Update on Works:**  Cllr Otter provided following updates:  Electrical work on VXCC has now been completed. There is further general maintenance required such as lights being replaced which will be completed in due course.  Update provided on asbestos removal at the allotments. Councillors informed that one allotment holder is insisting his shed roof is not asbestos. Councillors agreed if it remains in place the material will require testing for asbestos. |
| **8** | **JMC Grant:**  Cllr Bulmer gave an outline of the proposed remodelling of the Caldy Valley Neighbourhood Centre which will require an architects brief. The brief would provide options on how to remodel the centre and costs involved. Cllr Bulmer informed councillors it was anticipated grant funding would be explored to complete works.  A discussion about the future of the centre took place between councillors. Cllr Miller felt the project would be too costly and never achieved. Both Cllr Miller and Cllr Myler suggested the centre should be decorated and generally improved. However it was generally acknowledged the centre is a good asset to the community in the long term and should be retained. A further discussion then took place on current maintenance issues.  In conclusion Cllr Whiteley proposed that the grant be recommended for approval for sum of £2,500 provisionally if the other parties agree to contribute to the costs. |
| **9** | **Information Exchange:** No information to share |
| **10** | **Delegated Decisions to report to Parish Council:**  Clerk to join SLCC and enrol on ILCA course  Councillors to request and be enrolled on future training courses.  **Recommendations for Parish Council:**  A proposed financial budget for 2025/26 of £118,600.  A precept rise of 5%.  Approval of JMC grant to value of 2,500 for Caldy Valley Neighbourhood Centre. |

**AGENDA PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL**

***Members of the public are asked to leave the meeting at this point.***

***Part Two items are confidential and are defined by the Information Commissioner’s Office as containing personal information, information obtained in confidence and/or sensitive commercial interests). More information is contained in the Good Clerk’s Handbook NALC 2017.***

[***http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/publications/801-good-councillors-guide/file***](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/publications/801-good-councillors-guide/file)

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| **1** | **Attendance and apologies:**  Cllr Martin Whiteley (Governance Chair), Cllr Amanda Miller, Cllr Peter Bulmer, Cllr Krissie Myler  **In attendance (non-voting):** Keith Scargill (Chair of Council), Cllr Sam Otter, Cllr Amanda Thomas, Andrew Davies (Clerk) |
| **2** | **Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest were declared |
| **3** | **Staff Holiday Entitlement:** The clerk informed councillors that the VXCC manager had accrued holiday hours in excess of her yearly entitlement. Councillors were informed that in the coming year it is hoped that holidays accrued will be reduced to a more manageable level.  Following this a general discussion took place regarding future entitlement of holidays for staff and how this can be resolved. It was agreed that at this time holidays accrued to be managed by the clerk and further reported councillors over the next year. |