

Minutes of a Meeting of Middleham Town Council held in the Garden Room at Middleham Key Centre on Wednesday 4 January 2023 at 6.30 pm. (SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING)

Present

Chairman Cllr Mrs S Fairhurst, Cllr Mrs H Byford, Cllr Fortune, Cllr Mr S Mashford, Cllr Mr D Palethorpe, Cllr Mrs L Skelton, Cllr Mr S Watson.

No members of the public were present.

Clerk Mr D Keep.

Action

1. Open Forum.

No members of the public present.

2. Introduction and Apologies.

2.1 Apologies. The Chairman declared the meeting open. All Councillors were present.

2.2 Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda. Each Councillor present being a Council taxpayer had an interest in agenda item 3 setting the precept and had been granted a dispensation at the previous meeting and accordingly could speak and vote on this matter.

No further interests other than those previously notified were declared in matters on the agenda.

2.3 Confidential and Urgent Items. Two additional matters were agreed for discussion and recorded in the confidential minute book.

2.4 Budget for 2023 -24 and Precept. The Clerk set out the key assumptions underlying the budget, explaining the practice adopted which continued that for previous years, as set out in the briefing paper circulated to the preceding meeting. The following adjustments to expenditure were made, reflecting recent estimates received:

- To increase cobble repair works by £1,000 to £4,000.
- To increase tree maintenance costs by £500 to £2,500.
- To provide for the full annual running costs in the event that the Key Centre reverted to Council as landlord, amounting to £15,000.

On behalf of the MKC Trustees, Cllr Byford explained that running costs might not need to be provided for in full as the reduced running costs secured by the trustees had extended the period before funds were exhausted; there was also scope for returning some cash to Council. It was agreed to leave the full provision in the draft budget.

It was agreed that where future costs were unknown, it was realistic to assume a rate of inflation over the coming year of 5%. All other assumptions made in the draft budget were agreed to be reasonable and realistic.

The draft budget indicated a shortfall of income to cover costs of £27,799. It was agreed that the potential need to subsidise MKC operating costs was an exceptional item. Excluding this item reduced the shortfall to £12,799. Accordingly, a precept of £12,750 (2022-23: £12,250), being a 4% increase, was deemed appropriate to reflect Council's increased costs of operation. The shortfall would be transferred from reserves.

Action

Clerk

Having been proposed by Cllr Fairhurst and seconded by Cllr Fortune It Was Resolved to approve a precept of £12,750 for 2023-24.

The Clerk would inform RDC.

A copy of the agreed budget is attached to and forms part of the minutes of this meeting.

2.5 Confidential Business. Recorded in the confidential minute book.

The next monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday 8 February 2023.

There being no further business the chair declared the meeting closed at 9.55pm

Signed.....Date.....