

**MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD 16<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2019**

**PRESENT** - Councillor Carr (In the Chair) and Councillors (Cllrs): T Hughes, P McKinley, D Mullen and J Sayers.

**ALSO PRESENT** – A. McIntyre (Town Clerk), A. Spencer (Amenities Manager), D. Healey (Finance Officer) and S. Lawrence (Minutes).

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllrs C Carlsen, K Hughes and S Doherty.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – None notified.
3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – None notified.
4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 for Finance & General Purposes Committee were approved as a correct record.

5. **TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2019**

It was noted that the cost of consumables had increased including, red diesel and utility charges. Members also queried the current position with regard to lease negotiations. Members were informed that the Tennis Club and the Venue leases had both expired and were due to be negotiated. The Venue lease had already started renegotiations but that these had stalled due to intransigence by the lessee.

Members also discussed the social value the Council brought to Maghull and how this could be measured. A meeting was planned for the following week to discuss this further.

Members considered the level of grants applied for by the Council which had previously been low. It was explained that the level of expertise within the Council was low and that this would need to be increased to ensure that bids were successful. It was noted that the Clerk at Lydiate Parish Council had a background in successful bid writing and that she might be approached to see if she would be willing to assist the Council.

**RESOLVED that:-**

1. **The Clerk at Lydiate Parish Council be contacted regarding bidding applications.**
2. **The Financial Statements as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 be noted.**

## 6. BUDGET REPORT

Town Clerk introduced the budget report and explained the current situation. The basis for the proposed precept demand was examined following the auditor's report and the need for an Asset Management Plan. The Council needed to set a balanced budget taking into account all relevant factors within the organisation. The precept was currently at a rate below inflation increases across nine years with the precept only having been raised two years out of nine.

### Key Points made by Town Clerk:

- Income generation – following the staffing review it was decided to cease operations for external customers last year.
- Cricket club lease is to remain at £2035 p.a. However with the expense of separating the electricity meter and fixing the car park lights no profit will be made for over 18 months.
- Indoor Bowls – an extra charge of 20p as the facility is vatable. Therefore this will over the vat cost. All other charges to remain the same.
- Free Room Hire – Social Value element, various community groups. Tai Chi - not for profit organisation.
- Pension contributions rate has decreased which would provide a £13000 saving.
- Anticipated 2% pay raise for MTC Staff based on estimate from the past five years.
- Projects were included in the Business Plan in September 2019, social engagement and improvement to the Estate.
- Drainage is an issue in various places around Maghull. The increased precept would not include works to parks drainage. Maghull Town council would look to bidding for a grant from the Landfill Tax pot as the area was within the specified distance from a Landfill site.
- Town Hall needs considerable investment; replacement lighting, a full re-wire, new windows and frames, replacement of radiators.
- Current asset maintenance budget for all buildings on the estate is £12500, the estimate cost for works on the TH lighting and rewire is £25000.

It was recommended that the precept be raised by £8.77 (17p weekly increase). The reserves were currently at £332000 which was a lower rate than that recommended by the Audit Guidelines. The levels of reserves were not sufficient to cover the outstanding loans or to pay for any redundancies. The precept would need to be increased to cover the additional staffing costs anticipated in the new financial year. It was also noted that the vehicles in the fleet were becoming more difficult to maintain and needed replacing with newer more efficient models.

### Key Points made by Cllrs:

- Close monitoring of flooding/drainage issues.
- Potential for precept to be lower when the new housing developments are complete.
- Rather than raise precept to 8.82% MTC need to look at the assets to raise more income. Also look at all existing contracts of expenditure. Where can we make savings?

The Chair proposed a 6.37% precept increase against 8.82% recommended by Town Clerk. Members were informed that the recommendation would be taken to the next Full Council meeting.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- 1. The Committee recommended to Full Council that the precept be raised by 8.87%;**
- 2. The free room hire for Tai Chi be reviewed;**
- 3. The security and cleaning contracts to be reviewed;**
- 4. The report be noted.**

**7. S106 EXPENDITURE**

A. Spencer (Amenities Manager) provided a brief explanation of the report seeking approval for the use of section 106 funds to progress projects identified by Members.

**Projects:**

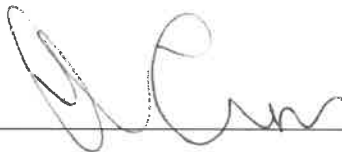
- Play equipment and play area upgrades at King George V Playing Field
- Play equipment and play area upgrades at Glenn Park
- Soft landscaping at Maghull North Train Station
- Installation of an interactive information screen at Maghull North Train Station.

**RESOLVED that:-**

- 1. The funding for all projects detailed above be approved;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

**8. CHAIRS REPORT**

Cllr Carr wished all a Merry Christmas.



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**CHAIRMAN**

