

Executive Committee

20th February 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall, Jinny Pearce, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor

Also Present:

Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall, Jinny Pearce, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor and Mr M Collins (Vice Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

T Beech, K Dicks, C Flanagan, S Hanley, S Morgan, J Pickering, S Skinner and J Smyth

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

163. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

164. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

165. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

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Chair

166. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS - ANNUAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2012-13

The Committee considered the recommendations for the coming year from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire District Councils. The Leader advised the meeting that she considered Members were placed in an invidious position each year in having to determine the level of remuneration applicable to them, most particularly at a time of considerable economic pressure. She suggested that levels of remuneration should be set externally by Central Government, or the Remuneration Panel (IRP) itself.

She recommended that the budget for Members' Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances remain at the same level as proposed by the IRP for 2011/12 and 2012/13. However, individual Members would have the discretion as to whether they accepted the full level of allowances available to them or the lower amount that had been taken by most Members in the previous year.

It was proposed that the Member Support Steering Group should critically consider the present apportionment of Special Responsibility Allowances to determine whether they were set at the appropriate levels and targeted at the appropriate positions. An amendment to the Scheme was also proposed to bring the travel allowances for Members in line with those now set for Officers by incorporating an additional amount for carrying a qualifying passenger.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) in view of the continuing exceptional economic circumstances, the Basic Allowance remains unchanged from the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations from 2011/12 for 2012/13 at £3350 per Councillor;**
- 2) the Special Responsibility Allowances similarly remain unchanged for 2012/13, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report;**
- 3) travel allowances for 2012/13 continue to be paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage allowance (currently 45p per mile) and an additional 5p per mile be paid for each qualifying passenger;**
- 4) subsistence allowances for 2012/13 remain unchanged;**

- 5) **the Dependent Carer's Allowance remains unchanged; and**
- 6) **for Parish Councils in the Borough, if travel and subsistence is paid, it is paid in accordance with the rates paid by the Borough Council and in accordance with the relevant Regulations.**

167. INITIAL ESTIMATES REPORT 2012/13, 2012/14 AND 2014/15 AND STATEMENT OF PAY POLICY

The meeting received a report setting out the estimates for spending for each service and any high priority capital and revenue bids for the coming years, together with a proposed Statement of Pay Policy document.

Officers highlighted the ongoing financial pressures on the authority and the expectation that these would continue for the next two years at least. The Finance Team had undertaken a rigorous examination of service budgets to identify areas for savings and additional scrutiny of the budget bids had been provided by both the Council's Budget Jury and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Savings were being achieved through measures such as the sharing of services, the Single Management Team and Transformation. However, it was proposed that £259,000 be taken from balances in the current year, retaining what was considered a prudent level of reserves of £901,000.

The Localism Act had placed a new requirement on local authorities, the publication of a Pay Policy Statement, and this had been incorporated as an appendix to the current report. It was noted that the levels of pay reflected in the Policy Statement reflected the position prior to Job Evaluation as that was still awaiting final agreement by all parties. It was also noted that the Statement incorrectly asserted that the Head of Housing post was a shared cost, whereas it was a cost borne solely by Redditch.

The Leader stated that the budget proposals were focussed on investment in the Council's equipment, staff and physical resources as well as the environment and local neighbourhoods. Whilst the Council would have liked to have invested more in services, this was not possible in the current financial situation.

It was finally noted that the Taxpayers' Alliance had recently congratulated the Council on the reduction achieved in its management cost by transferring to a shared management team.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the high bids as identified in Appendix A to the report be approved:

2012/13	£116,000
2013/14	£101,000
2014/15	£101,000;

- 2) the high capital bids as detailed in Appendix B to the report be approved:

2012/13	£1,217,000
2013/14	£1,586,000
2014/15	£1,687,000;

- 3) the use of balances totalling £259,000 be approved;
- 4) the Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix D to the report be approved;
- 5) the retention by Redditch Cricket, Hockey and Rugby Club of the sum representing the refund on VAT on the grant funded works undertaken at their grounds in 2005/06 be approved and, in return, the Club agree to relieve the Council's of its commitment to provide a sinking fund for the refurbishment/replacement of the all weather pitch (ATP) which will in future be the exclusive responsibility of the Club; and
- 6) the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be requested to prepare an agreement that brings Resolution 5), above, about.

168. SETTING OF THE COUNCIL TAX 2012/13

Members considered the report that would enable them to set the level of Council Tax for the Borough for the coming year.

Given the prevailing economic conditions and the effect that this was having on the residents of the Borough it was proposed that the Council Tax level for 2012/13 remain at the same level it had been for the previous two years.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **it be noted that at its meeting on the 16th of January 2012 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2012/13 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:**
 - a) **27,611.67**

being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax Base for the year;
 - b) **Feckenham Parish – 363.60**

being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the regulations, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;

- 2) **the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2012/13 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:**
 - a) **£ 71,045,020**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account the precept issued by Feckenham Parish Council.

(2012/13 Gross General Fund Expenditure)
 - b) **£65,260,831**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

(2012/13 Gross General Fund Income)
 - c) **£5,784,189**

being the amount by which the aggregate at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

(2012/13 Council Tax Requirement)

d) **£209.48**

being the amount at 2 (c) above divided by the amount at 1 (a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year (including parish precept).

(The average amount Band D properties pay for Redditch Borough Council services)

e) **£8,300**

being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act;

(Feckenham Parish Precept)

f) **£209.18**

being the amount at 2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2(e) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates.

(The amount Band D properties pay (except within the Parish of Feckenham) for Borough Council Services)

g) **£232.01**

being the amount given by adding to the amount at 2(f) above, the amount of the special item relating to the Parish of Feckenham, divided by the amount in 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in the Parish of Feckenham;

(The amount Band D properties pay within the Parish of Feckenham for Borough Council Services including the Parish Precept)

h)

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Part of Council's area	
		Parish of Feckenham	All other parts of the Councils area
A	6/9	£154.67	£139.46
B	7/9	£180.45	£162.70
C	8/9	£206.23	£185.94
D	1	£232.01	£209.18
E	11/9	£283.57	£255.67
F	13/9	£335.13	£302.15
G	15/9	£386.68	£348.64
H	18/9	£464.02	£418.37

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2(f) and 2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands;

- 3) **it be noted that, for the year 2012/13, Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police Authority and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:**

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Precepting Authority		
		Worcestershire County Council	West Mercia Police Authority	H & W Fire & Rescue Authority
A	6/9	£692.71	£119.15	£49.10
B	7/9	£808.16	£139.00	£57.28

C	8/9	£923.61	£158.86	£65.46
D	1	£1,039.06	£178.72	£73.64
E	11/9	£1,269.97	£218.44	£90.01
F	13/9	£1,500.87	£258.15	£106.38
G	15/9	£1,731.77	£297.87	£122.74
H	18/9	£2,078.13	£357.44	£147.28

- 4) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2(h) and 3 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2012/13 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Part of Council's area	
		Parish of Feckenham	All other parts of the Council's area
A	6/9	£1,015.63	£1,000.42
B	7/9	£1,184.89	£1,167.14
C	8/9	£1,354.16	£1,333.87
D	1	£1,523.43	£1,500.60
E	11/9	£1,861.99	£1,834.09
F	13/9	£2,200.53	£2,167.55
G	15/9	£2,539.06	£2,501.02
H	18/9	£3,046.87	£3,001.22

- 5) the level of General Fund balances to be utilised in 2012/13 be £258,945; and
- 6) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2012/13 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined for the year by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZB Local Government Act 1992.

The Meeting commenced at 7.04 pm
and closed at 7.28 pm

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Chair