

TRAWDEN FOREST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Budget Meeting held on Monday the 11th January 2021 by Zoom

Meeting started 7.00pm

Present

Chairperson Barry Hodgson	Councillor Beverley Robinson	Clerk Adele Waddington
Cllr David Barritt	Cllr David Storey	Cllr Clare Storey
Cllr Emma Jane MacDonald	Cllr Andrea Beswick	

Apologies: Cllr Paul Reyner, Cllr Ruth Crompton

Minutes for the 2020 budget meeting were proposed by Cllr C Storey, seconded by Cllr MacDonald.

Cllr Hodgson and the Responsible Financial Officer Adele Waddington have worked on a proposed budget for the new financial year which was discussed initially at the December meeting. At that meeting it was proposed that we look at increasing these costs by 5% and 10% as it is feared that a cap may be put on the precept increased allowed.

We are in unprecedented times, and Councillors have already decided not to increase the allotment and garage tenancy rents. Cllr Robinson is concerned that there are a lot of people suffering on low incomes and furlough. Cllr Beswick felt that even a 5% increase would be too big at the current time. Cllr Hodgson proposed that we increase the value of the precept to £91770, which should show as a 0% increase on the Council Tax bill. Cllr Robinson thinks that, if this can be worked, it should be agreed and seconded the proposal. All Councillors agreed to the whole of the budget for 2021/2.

It was suggested that we put out a press release to state that the Council Tax, allotment rents, and garage rents are not to be increased this year, and thank all of our volunteers, Councillors and Lengthsman for the many voluntary hours that they put in.

The Councillors agreed to increase the Clerks salary by another increment and asked her to work another hour per week. It was agreed to do the incremental increase until she is at the top of the scale. Proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr D Storey. Put to vote – all in favour. All Councillors thanked the Clerk for the work she has done over the last, very difficult year.

Friends of Trawden Playground

Sam Eastell from Friends of Trawden Playground attended the meeting to put forward the proposals of the group. The group was started after there had been many anti-social behaviour issues over the lockdown by young people who feel that there is very little for them to do around the parish.

Prior to the meeting Sam sent information for the proposed alterations to the playground, which look impressive, and confirmed that the idea of gaining adjoining land for a multi-use games area (MUGA) and/or wheel park have now been abolished. These are set to be relocated. Sam confirmed that they are looking at installing a MUGA in the school field, and talks are continuing with Cllr Purcell and Lisa Stinchon (Head of Trawden School) on how and if this can proceed. The group have received offers of CCTV, have set up a bank account and have received their first grant.

The alterations to the playground are vast, and the timescale would be 3-5 weeks for completion. It is proposed that CCTV would also be installed on the playground. They appear to have sponsors already in place for the playground and have done this design on the results of a children's questionnaire that they have designed. As proposed by the Parish Council, an adult's questionnaire has now been created and is set to be distributed. They have received letters of support from various sources for this project. Lancashire County Council have done a site visit and the group are waiting for proposals for alterations to the footpath and entrance to the playground. Any alterations to the entrance would of course need to be approved by the Parish Council.

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Councillors discussed the proposals and were very impressed at the work that has already gone into these ideas, but feel that, as the groups original idea was to create something for the 12–16-year-old age bracket, it is the wrong time to be upgrading the playground. There have been issues with anti-social behaviour already, and Councillors feel that these improvements would only encourage more young people to congregate here. Councillors asked that the Clerk write to the group and state that they are willing to work with the group to get the right balance of green space and equipment on the playground, only once the MUGA and/or wheel park have been completed. This should hopefully encourage the right age group to use these other facilities instead of the younger children's playground. The Parish Council is already set to take on ownership of Ball Grove in the very near future, and this has a substantial playground within the Park. Councillors feel that the playground at Lane House Lane should be kept smaller so that it does not encourage people to drive to an area where there is very limited parking available.

Trawden Arms Asset of Community Value

The Parish Council was advised just before Christmas, that the owners of the Trawden Arms have given them notice of intention to dispose. A small group of residents have come forward hoping to pursue the purchase as a community group. The Clerk asked the Councillors whether they agreed that the Clerk should respond to Pendle Borough Council with the information as above. It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson that this should be put to them, seconded by Cllr Robinson. Put to vote – all in favour.

Payments

There were 3 payments put to the Councillors:
£172.50 for Lengthsman December Hours
£36 for Mercer Print for the Thank You cards
£14.16 for cement for Trawden in Bloom

LCC Council Tax Increase

Lancashire County Council are proposing to increase their Council Tax by 4.99%, 3% of which would be ring-fenced for Adult Social care. Councillors discussed the proposals and they feel that, due to the current situation, more services will be called upon from Council's so the increase is necessary.

Funding for Forest School

The Clerk received a letter from Trawden School asking for funding for their Forest School. Councillors feel that this is an important element of children's learning, as many do not appear to spend a lot of time outdoors. Councillors agreed that they would give £500 towards their project. The Clerk to contact school to inform them.

Funding for Bowling Club

A request of £500 funding towards the Bowling Club was received. Some Councillors didn't know that there was a Bowling Club in Trawden, as they do not appear to do any advertising, or encouraging of new members. Councillors discussed their application, and it was agreed that Cllr Hodgson would meet committee members to ask them what their ideas of gaining new members was, as they must give guarantees that they will promote their club.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm