

Snodland Town Council – Policy and Finance Minutes

5th December 2024

Committee Members in attendance:	Cllrs Ms D King (VC), Mrs S Bell, P Hickmott, A Bennison, D Lettington and G Miners
Non Committee Members in attendance:	
Committee Members Absent with apologies:	Cllrs Mrs V Lawrence-Rose (C) W Mallard, S Loader
Committee Members Absent without apologies:	
Council Staff Present:	Mrs K Sowten (CEO) Mrs K Miners
Members of the public:	

1.	<u>Apologies for absence</u> see above.
2.	<u>Declaration of Interests</u> None
3.	<u>Minutes - To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2024</u> The minutes of the meeting held on the 31 st October 2024 were agreed as a true record.
4.	<u>Questions from the Public</u> There were no members of the public present
5.	<u>Audit Trail to be given by a Councillor</u> An audit trail was completed by the Chairman. Checks were made on bank reconciliations and insurance renewal and was satisfied all was in place. A full copy is available on file. Next audit is in February 2025 – Cllr Lettington to complete.
6.	<u>Financial Review</u> <u>6.1 Income and Expenditure Report</u> No questions were raised. <u>6.2 Expenditure under delegated authority</u> Ceiling tiles for Medway Rooms and Devonshire Room Cupboard. Following the installation of new style lighting in the Devonshire Rooms, additional tiles were required, which were taken from the Devonshire Room cupboard and Medway room as they matched and new tiles purchased to replace them.

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	<p><u>6.3 Aged Debtors</u></p> <p>One aged debtor is continuing to pay off the outstanding balance.</p> <p><u>6.4 Earmarked Reserve and Capital Reserve Balances</u></p> <p>Earmarked reserves and capital can be separated if needed. They are all reserved for a purpose.</p> <p>War memorial – in the spring would like it cleaned. Would like it completed before VE Day.</p> <p>Action: To contact the lady who cleans the Commonwealth graves to see if she has any contacts.</p>
7.	<p><u>To receive the response from KCC regarding the Community Warden</u></p> <p>A response has been received. It is a vague response and still doesn't answer our questions.</p> <p>The committee discussed the possible options relating to either sponsoring a Warden via KCC or direct employment. The following comments were made –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that it is a good idea, this is a great loss to Snodland not to have this service. • Think we need to seriously consider including a Warden in the Budget based on the £45,000 cost the increase would probably end up being very small per household. • Agree about the service but not the cost. • What would happen if we paid for this and KCC re-instated this position? • Feel it unlikely that once the service has been withdrawn it will ever be reinstated. • We should try to keep our existing warden. • The KCC option would be direction from them how they want to use them. But if we employed someone then we can use them for what we want. We need to ensure that we have a service level agreement in place to enable contact and information sharing with other professionals. • Request data under a freedom of information request to see how Snodland compares to other areas who have received a warden. • Revisit once we have the data to decide. <p>1353 RESOLVED to request data under the freedom of information request from KCC to see how Snodland compares to other areas who have received a warden.</p>
8.	<p><u>To write off Bad Debt relating to Peridise Cafe</u></p>

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1354	<p>A CCJ has been applied to the prior tenant of the café with no payment forthcoming.</p> <p>RESOLVED to write off the bad debt relating to Peridise Café for £4426.62 (£6457.62 less £2055 from rent deposit held).</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>1355</p> <p>1356</p>	<p><u>To approve the Councils Health and Safety documentation</u></p> <p>9.1 Health and Safety Policy - Updated in line of legislation. RESOLVED to adopt the Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>9.2 Health and Safety Employee Handbook – Updated in line with legislation. RESOLVED to adopt the Health and Safety Handbook</p> <p>9.3 Risk Assessments The CEO advised of a number of items that need to be instigated -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legionella testing • Noise and tool vibration assessment • Updated asbestos register <p>The consultant advised that the fire risk assessment needs to be updated.</p>
10.	<p><u>To consider the First Draft Budget</u></p> <p>The CEO presented the first draft budget. A full copy is available on file. The main points raised were as follows –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary increases not yet agreed by the NJC 6% increase allowed. • Partnership grant removed. • Brooklands pavilion removed as no tenant. • Cemetery kerbstones – reduction as income needs to reimburse reserves when new kerbstones purchased in bulk. • Estimated cost for new fencing for Potyns. • Utilities and tax for Community Hub has been included. • Amended since first draft budget printed to include change to Pavilion chess club rent as per agreed figures at Amenities and Recreation. • Does not include any allowance for a Community Warden, this will be considered at the next meeting. <p>The amended figure shows an increase in the precept from £344811 to £352286. The tax base from TMBC has not yet been received for 2025/26 and therefore based on the 2024/25 tax base of 3959.82 would amount to an increase of £1.89 on band D properties.</p> <p>The Committee agreed with the first draft budget, however, would be considering this in full at the January meeting, when further clarification has been received regarding the outcome of the community warden.</p>
11.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p><u>None</u></p>

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There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:02