

LISKEARD TOWN COUNCIL

AT A MEETING of the **FINANCE AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 13 January 2015 there were present:

The Mayor Councillor Phil Seeva - in the Chair

The Deputy Mayor - Councillor Jane Pascoe Ex-officio

Councillors: Rachel Brooks, Ian Goldsworthy, Sally Hawken, Adam Hodgkins, Lorna Shrubsole, James Shrubsole, and Hella Tovar

Town Clerk; Steve Vinson

Minute Clerk; Mr Stuart Houghton

Members of the Public - None

573/14 PUBLIC SPEAKER

No members of the public were present.

574/14 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jane Pascoe and Councillor Adam Hodgkins,

575/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Goldsworthy declared a non registerable interest in the Liskeard Lions grant application

576/14 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEETING 25 NOVEMBER 2014

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Brooks seconded and the Committee **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Finance and Strategy Committee meeting held on the 25 November 2014. The Mayor signed these Minutes.

577/14 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT - FOR INFORMATION

The Town Clerk's report had been circulated.

578/14 BUDGET REPORT TO 31 OCTOBER 2014 and PROJECTED 2015/2016 BUDGET

The budget report to 31 October 2014 had been previously discussed.

The Town Clerk's report contained proposals for the 2015/2016 budget.

579/14 COUNCIL BUDGET SETTING OPTIONS ACCEPTANCE OF COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

The details of each Committee's proposal was included in the attached Town Clerk's report. He confirmed that the Council would not be capped this year. The Council therefore needed to increase its income stream, such as installing photovoltaic panels on the Public Hall.

Two elements were to be considered, with £20k of increased items and with an additional £30k for the photovoltaic panels.

Communication & Engagement Committee

Had included for £7k of additional items but had a problem with the requirement to provide brown tourists signs which had a potential cost of up to £20k. They suggested that other sources of funding might be available which would allow the Councils cost for this item to be reduced.

Property Committee

The basic proposal did not include for any additional items, the key item would be the provision of the photovoltaic panels which would provide an income stream for the Council and a payback time of about six years. This cost to be included this year would be £30k.

In response to a question, Councillor Goldsworthy replied that the scheme for improvements to the Public Hall, to increase revenue, was ongoing. Monies had been allocated for this year and would build up a dedicated reserve for this item.

Staff Committee

The Town Clerk reported that the cost for paying the double increments that had not been awarded when due was £5333. An estimate for the cost additional back increments was £3391. He had been advised by Ellis Whittam that payments of the Contractual increments would recover the situation, although the time stipulated for referring matters to the Employment Tribunal was three months therefore this matter could not be referred to it.

The Mayor stated that the Council was contractually obliged to make these payments and was trying to correct an error made by the previous administration.

Members agreed that they should look to the future, and when this matter was concluded they should consider paying the Living Wage to the Council's employees

Museum Committee

The Museum curator had raised the matter of damp damaging some of the Council's records and property stored in the Museum's roof area, which needed to be inspected and recovered. As these items were the property of the Town Council the cost of conservation should not come from the Museum's budget. The Town Clerk reported that he had been given an estimated cost of £2k for the initial work.

The Mayor proposed, Councillor Brooks seconded and the Committee **RESOLVED** to RECOMMEND that the Council include the following items for the 2015/2016 Precept.

C&E Committee	£12.5k (includes £5.5k contribution towards brown signs)
Museum Committee	£2k
Staff Committee	<u>£5.5k</u>
Total	£20k plus £30k for photovoltaic panels on the Public Hall

580/14 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Councillor Goldsworthy left the meeting at 2005.

1. Application for a grant from the Lions Club of Liskeard

Members discussed the work of the Lions Club and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £300 be made.

Councillor Goldsworthy returned to the meeting at 2008.

581/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Finance and Strategy Committee meeting would be at 7.30 pm on 24 February 2015

4. Clerk's Report – For Information – 13th January 2015

Meeting & Action	Update	Who & When
F & S Nov 14 Insurance Renewal	Council insurance cover renewed for an additional two year period. This includes the increase in cover for loss of income at the Guildhall from the original 18 months to three years.	TC Jan 15

5. Committee Budget Report to 31st December 2014 and projected 2015/2016 budget for the Committee

This is a separate budget sheet which will be provided.

6. Council Budget Setting Options and Precept 2015/2016, acceptance of Property, Communications and Engagement and Museum Committee proposals

Introduction The previous Finance and Strategy Committee meeting considered the strategy for taking forward the Council's Budget and Precept setting for the 2015/2016 year. The Council subsequently approved this strategy and this report today outlines the response of the service committees to the element required of them. It also provides some additional information on potential rate capping as some Councillors raised this concern.

Rate Capping The Government advice is that for Principal Councils, such as, Cornwall Council, the 2% threshold will remain in 2015/2016. However, this will not be applied to Parish and Town Councils in the 2015/2016 financial year.

There is recognition that some Parishes and Town Councils have been setting consistently high precept increases over a number of years and that this is being monitored by the Government. Under the current arrangements the Government can intervene directly with those Councils.

Committee Budget Items In accordance with the strategy approved by Council the relevant service committees have been working up a list of items that will be considered for possible inclusion in the 2015/2016 budget.

The Council has already indicated that the £50,000 growth option will be split into two elements with priority given to the photovoltaic cells.

- £30,000 – for photovoltaic panels for the Public Hall – to cut costs and generate an income stream to help cover the reductions in the Town Council's Council Support Grant.
- £20,000 – other items including economic measures – to develop the current work streams and work capacity of the Town Council especially those aimed at improving the economic wellbeing of the town.

The service committees have been working up proposals towards the £20,000 other items heading. Two of the Committees will be meeting after the completion of this agenda and their deliberations will be reported at the meeting.

From the information at hand at the moment the following proposals are being put forward:

Communications and Engagement Committee

TIC extended opening hours including Saturdays - £1,500
 Town Map Panels and Leaflets - £4,500
 Hanging Baskets and Banners - £1,000
 Brown Signs * estimate £8,000 - £20,000

*provisional costing taken from statutory guidance note and application pack actual costs will vary according to size and nature of size of the sign and if permission is granted.

Property Committee

Topographical Survey Westborne *- estimate £2,500
 Rapsons Boundary Maintenance *- estimate £1,500

*with both of these items if the quotes are sufficiently low then they will probably be undertaken in the relevant 2014/2015 Property Committee budgets rather than as 2015/2016 growth items. Property Committee meeting is being held before Finance and Strategy and feedback will be provided on their discussions.

Staff Committee

Contract of Employment related Issues *-
 *Staff Committee being held on 12th January recommendations to be reported to Finance and Strategy Committee meeting

Museum Committee

Conservator Service - *-£2,000
 *estimate based upon initial specialist external advice.

Next Steps Finance and Strategy are asked to consider from the above list which items should the Council put forward in its budget proposals for 2015/2016 to total but not exceed £20,000.

This will then be reported to the 20th January Council meeting for consideration with the budget and precept setting 2015/2016.