

Duffield Parish Council

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 6 January 2004 at 7.15pm in the Committee Room, Hazelwood Road, Duffield

Present: Chairman: Councillor J Rowlands
Vice Chairman: Councillor N Storer
Councillors: Buckle, England, Knibbs and B Woodings

Also in attendance: Mr D R Bostock – Parish Clerk

Apologies for absence: None, all present.

F/01/04 2004/2005 Budget Requirement

Further to minute F/58/03 of the 2 December 2003 meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee the members present outlined their feelings regarding the Parish Council's Budget Requirement for the coming year. After due consideration they generally sought to achieve a reduction to the £70,000 precept level requirement, suggested by the Clerk.

The Clerk reminded members that the current precept level of £50,000 / annum had been in place since the 1 April 1999. He pointed out that if the rate of increase to cover inflation and slight growth had been maintained at the previous level of £1,500 / annum, the precept level in the current year would have been £57,500 / annum.

He also advised members that the increased cost of elections, the appointment of a Village Tidyman, Assistant Clerk and Football Supervisors, together with the new involvement with the Parish Plan, Fireworks Display, Christmas Decorations, Hanging Baskets etc, had all contributed to additional expenditure in the last five years, all on top of the aforesaid inflationary factors.

Finally he pointed out to those present that in Duffield, due to the nature and special circumstances of the village we had become the main burial, recreational and environmental provider for the area, all of which is very substantial additional burden to that of most Parish Councils in the vicinity.

In conclusion, to ameliorate members concerns the Clerk suggested several modest cuts in the proposed Committee Budgets in the sum of £8,700, in order to reduce the financial impact of this particularly difficult year.

Resolved:

- a) that the Budget request from the Footpaths Committee be reduced from £5,000 to £3,000.
- b) that the Budget request from the Open Spaces Committee be reduced from £23,700 to £21,700.
- c) that the Budget request from the Cemetery Committee be reduced from £28,750 to £26,750.
- d) that the Budget request from the Finance and General Purposes Committee be reduced from £40,000 to £37,300.
- e) that the Parish Council be recommended to set a precept of £65,000, for the 2004/2005 Financial Year.
- f) that the Assistant Clerk keeps a record of the time she spends on Parish Plan and Firework activities during the current year and that a Honorarium be paid to her at the end of the year from Parish Plan and Firework Funds.
- g) that the Clerk includes an item on the above Budget Proposals in the next Parish Council News Letter.

F/02/04 Bank of England 2.5% Consolidated Stock

The Clerk advised members that during 1974/75 the Parish Council invested £2,166.38 in the above stock, which had a value of 18p/unit at that time, having risen currently to 49p/unit. He also confirmed that interest had been accruing since the Council closed its NatWest Bank Account.

He further advised members, that the value of these stocks were unlikely to rise significantly in the present climate and sought members authority to sell the stock.

Resolved: that the Clerk seeks the advice of the Council's present Bankers on the best course of action with the above holding and he also establishes the type of investments we are allowed to make as a Parish Council.

F/03/04 Other Business

Councillor Woodings requested the Clerk to investigate the possible transfer of the Parish Council's Gray Recreation Ground Play Area to the Borough Council, at the appropriate time.

F/04/04 Date of Next Meeting

Resolved: that the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will take place on 23 March 2004.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed _____

Date _____