



AYLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Extraordinary Full Council** meeting held on **16th January 2024**
at Aylesham House

SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION AT THE NEXT MEETING

1. Those Present

Cllrs S. Bott (Chair); K. Sutcliffe (Vice Chair); L. Prescott; D. Fleck; G. Armstrong; D. Garrity; J. Flaig; D. Miller. Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer K. Robinson; Administration Officer N. Purcell.

No members of the public were present.

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr B. Oliver (personal reasons).

3. Declarations of Cllr Interests, Dispensations, and any changes to the Register of Interest

None.

4. Public Representation (Notified to Clerk in advance of the meeting, agenda items only)

None.

5. Staff Matters- Confidential to be held under the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act

Resolved: Under the terms of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960, by virtue of the business to be transacted involving staff matters. It was proposed by J. Flaig and seconded by K. Sutcliffe to move to a closed session for item 5.

Outcome: All in favour, motion carried.

19:02 Administration Officer left the meeting room.

Resolved: K. Sutcliffe proposed to accept the recommendations of the Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee for the changes to the Staff and Staffing Structure from 1st April 2024 in principle. Seconded by G. Armstrong.

Outcome: 7 in favour, 1 against. Motion carried.

19:23 Closed session ended, and the Administration Officer returned to the meeting room.

6. To set the Budget for 2024/2025

The Draft Budget was prepared by the Responsible Finance Officer, which was considered by the Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee at their October 2023 meeting. Full Council noted the Committee's Draft Budget recommendation at their November 2023 meeting. At this meeting (Extraordinary meeting January 2024) the Responsible Finance Officer went through the Budget spreadsheet line by line to Councillors.

Councillors requested no amendments to the budget headings.

Ear Marked Reserves (planned projects) for the financial year will be as follows:

- Highways Improvements (TRO's Speed Indicators) £10,000
 - Car Park £20,000
 - Aylesham House £55,000
- Total: £105,000.

Resolved: It was proposed by D. Garrity to accept the budget as discussed. Seconded by K. Sutcliffe.

Outcome: 7 votes in favour, 1 abstain. Motion carried.

7. To Set the Precept for 2024/2025

The Responsible Finance Officer provided information to Councillors ahead of the meeting detailing information about what a Precept is, and how it is calculated. Council also had information demonstrating different percentage increases to discuss. A detailed explanation was sent via email as shown in Appendix A.

Resolved: It was proposed by G. Armstrong to have a 0% increase on the precept for 2024/2025. Seconded by L. Prescott.

Outcome: 2 votes in favour, 6 against. Motion not carried.

Resolved: It was proposed by D. Garrity to have a 5% increase on the Precept with an addition 2% being collected from the reserves. Seconded by D. Miller

Outcome: Secunder withdrawn, no other seconder. Motion not carried.

Resolved: It was proposed by J. Flaig and seconded by K. Sutcliffe to increase the Precept for 2024/2025 to £219,093.80 for 2024/2025. This rise equates to increases to households as follows:

Council Tax Band	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
A	£8.37	70p	16p
B	£9.76	81p	19p
C	£11.16	93p	21p
D	£12.55	£1.05	24p
E	£15.34	£1.28	29p
F	£18.13	£1.51	35p
G	£20.92	£1.74	40p

Outcome: 6 votes in favour, 2 against. Motion carried.

-Meeting closed 20:14-

It has been agreed by Council that these minutes are a true and accurate record.

Signed.....(Chair)

Date.....

Aylesham Parish Council meeting February 2024

January 2024 Extraordinary meeting Appendices.

Appendix A

Email circulated to Councillors by the Parish Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer:

“The current financial year Precept income was £197,865.90 (April 2023- March 2024).

For the next financial year 01/04/2024-31/03/2025 if Aylesham Parish Council do not increase the Precept (0%) the Council’s income will be £204,754.71 (an additional income of £6,888.81 compared to this year 23/24). This is due to the rise in the Council Tax Base,

reflected in the Adjusted Total (minus discounts) of Chargeable Properties (page 1 of the Precept 2024/2025 document).

On the Budget Forecast 2024_2025 FC Jan 2024 Excel spreadsheet (attached this again), I inputted the figure of £204,754.71, which I always update for our January Full Council meeting once Dover District Council supplies the Precept information in late December each year.

The total spend for the year is currently calculated at £357,875.00 (excluding reserves). The Council's predicted bank balance as at 31/03/2024 (after predicted expenditure until 31/03/2024 has been accounted for) is now estimated to be £192,000.00 (which I have gone through again with a fine toothcomb and recalculated today). Council requires the minimum of £52,800 to hold in reserves (3 months' running costs). Therefore, we require a minimum additional sum £218,675 to cover all proposed expenditure for 2024/2025.

If there is 0% increase in the Precept, we have an overall shortfall of £13,920.29, as our income will be £204,754.71.

At present, with all budget headings set how they are (having gone through this again in fine detail this afternoon) Aylesham Parish Council would require a minimum increase in Precept of 7% required. 7% equates to an increase in income to £219,093.80 (to cover the overall shortfall), which is an additional income of £21,227.90 compared to this financial year 23/24. This equates to increases to households in the following:

Council Tax Band	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
A	£8.37	70p	16p
B	£9.76	81p	19p
C	£11.16	93p	21p
D	£12.55	£1.05	24p
E	£15.34	£1.28	29p
F	£18.13	£1.51	35p
G	£20.92	£1.74	40p

The Precept document (attached) that I prepared shows other % increases in Annual and Monthly costs. (pages 2 and 3).

In order to take on new projects such as the Neighbourhood Plan (£20,000 allocated at present), Allotments (£5,000 allocated at present) and Car park (£20,000 allocated at present) plus for example give the Recreational & Facilities Committee an increase of £9,253 which all require staff time, Council must consider the Draft Budget that was recommended

by the Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee at their October 2023 meeting; along with the recent additional amendments in orange (on the attached Budget Forecast spreadsheet).

The Budget for 2024/2025 has to be finalised and approved on Tuesday followed by the Precept. The reason we have to do the budget BEFORE the Precept is primarily because Aylesham Parish Council must demonstrate that the Precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process. This is to comply with Internal Control Objective D on the AGAR (Annual Governance Accountability Review – our internal/external audits).

Examples of other local councils in the Dover area Precept increases for 2024/2025 are at 19%, 65% and even 75%.

Our Precept is our only income other than £300 per annum rent from Roses Tea Room & Thrift Shop CIC. In recent Audit reports (and the Staffing Review) we have been advised yearly that our Precept is too low for the size of our Parish; and to continue to raise it annually; in order for the community to benefit further; and the Council to function. Aside from Staff expenditure (28.3% of the overall budget, in other Councils it is up to 60% of their annual budget) pretty much most of the remainder (around £192,897.50 and higher percentage) of the budget goes back into the Community/the Community benefits from.

If Council do not wish to consider a 7% increase, they will need to go through the Budget headings and consider which headings to reduce on Tuesday evening.

As I have recalculated the year end predicted bank balance today, a new copy of the Budget Forecast (attached) will be given to you at the meeting.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me in advance of the meeting next week.”

-End of appendices-