

**MINUTES OF ATALGARTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AT 7PM, MONDAY, 17 JANUARY 2022, HELD REMOTELY, TO DETERMINE THE PRECEPT FOR 2022/2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO LINK:** Cllr P Lewis (Mayor) (In the Chair), Cllr A Bufton, Cllr M Dodds, Cllr C Green, Cllr G Jones, Cllr A Lord, Cllr T McClatchey, Cllr R Parry, Cllr W Powell (Town & Powys County Councillor), Cllr R Reid

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr L Elston-Reeves (Deputy Mayor), Cllr C Voyle

**IN ATTENDANCE BY VIDEO LINK: Josephine Rumsey (Town Clerk)**

**WELCOME:** Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, welcomed members to the virtual meeting of Talgarth Town Council.

**22/20 DECLARE MATTERS OF INTEREST** – No matters of interest

**22/21 MINUTES** – The Minutes of the last Precept meeting held on 11 Jan 2021 and approved at the 20 Jan 2021 meeting were circulated, for ease of reference.

**22/22 CORRESPONDENC** – Received the following, previously circulated.

**PCC Precept letter dated 3/11/2021** – Noted Clerk to complete Precept form request - to be returned to PCC by 31/01/2022.

**PCC Election letter dated 15/11/2021** – Noted the information relating to the Elections on Thurs 5 May 2022, for Powys County Councillors and Town & Community Councillors and if we wish to re-stand as a Town Councillor, we will all have to reapply – Clerk will advise of the procedure when more information from PCC, is received.

**St Gwendoline’s Churchyard – Health & Safety of Failed Memorials** – Noted the Public Notice has been inserted in the Brecon & Radnor Express issue of 20/01/2022 - Cost £136.80 + VAT.

**22/23 TO DETERMINE THE PRECEPT FOR 2022-2023** – Clerk had circulated the following supporting papers with the Agenda, in advance of the meeting –

*(a) Precept Form including 2022 - 2023*

*(b) Accounts Estimates Year 1/4/2021 – 31/3/2022 - red highlighted figures are estimated and black figures are actual*

*(c) Approved Accounts Year 1/4/2020 – 31/3/2021 – For comparative reference.*

*(d) Advice notes prepared by Cllr A Lord – To follow - A copy will be forwarded to Town Councillors after the meeting*

Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, handed over to Cllr A Lord - for his presentation.

Cllr A Lord explained the documents, which had been prepared, on behalf of the Town Council, in order to determine the Precept 2022-2023.

- Precept Report including budget projections, actual spend and advice notes
- Explanatory Precept Notes – Cllr Lord went through his presentation on overheads, of the Precept form against the key points indicated in his notes.

**Reserves** – Resolved that one-off expenditure projected for the next financial year, be met from the reserves and new recurring financial commitments will be precepted for.

- **King George V Children's Play area** – Cllr A Lord reported that TADSCA been granted £8000 by Powys County Council from its 'Covid Recovery Fund' towards improving the play area and TADSCA has earmarked £8000 of its own funds for the purpose and depending upon the final 'shopping list' could extend that figure to £10,000. Secured approx. £18,000 plus an extra £5,000 from the Town Council which we agreed last year, for the Children's Play area.

Noted that the Town Council had previously agreed to place the orders for the new equipment - the problem is that the Town Council would normally ask for 3 competitive tenders and make a choice from one of them but it appears from TADSCA that there is only one company called Wicksteed, who are in a position to actually provide the equipment and provide the surface of fixing the playground. It was also noted that Steve Butcher PCC used this company and came across the same problem when purchasing the items for the Woodlands Play area scheme.

**RESOLVED:** Unanimously agreed that we accept the only Tender of the Wicksteed tender, in the circumstances, and place the order as soon as possible.
- **Xmas Lights** – Cllr R Reid reported that it was the intention of the Xmas lights group, this year but not happened due to COVID, to get in new lights with LED for around the walls and been investigating the costs, so the reserves mentioned could well be required for the next year.
- **Handyman** – Cllr M Dodds requested the proposed position be discussed.

Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, proposed we postpone this proposal until next year 2023-2024, given the current situation/circumstances.

Cllr A Bufton seconded this proposal.

Cllr M Dodds suggested we put the money one side, and appoint a person on a self-employed basis for one year only, in case circumstances do allow.

Cllr T McClatchey seconded this proposal.

Both proposals went to the vote. 7 Councillors supported the first proposal of Cllr P Lewis, Mayor and 2 Councillors supported the second proposal of Cllr M Dodds. Cllr A Lord abstained.

**RESOLVED:** To carry the proposal, to postpone the proposed Handyman position to precept 2023/2024 – with the caveat that we really push on with it and try and get some definitive costs etc in the meantime, to see where we can go with this and to see if we can incorporate any of the duties into the new Caretaker role.
- **Public Conveniences** – Discussion took place on these high costs, which amounts to £15,146.04 this year due to the second clean per day due to COVID.

Suggestions made to ask the possibility of any grant funding, if any other companies could be approached for comparative costs and if this could be including in the Caretaker role.
- **Town Council Loan Account** – Clerk circulated information re the Loan Account- Noted the balance outstanding, as at 5 January 2022 is £17,558.01.

For information, Loan originally taken out for 8 years on 8 Sept 2015 – Fixed Interest Rate of 2.12% . Note we make 6 x monthly payments of £4,506.46 per annum – which includes principal and interest at 2.12% - the next payment will be on 8 March 2022. For information our loan ends on 8th September 2023.

#### **PROJECT LIST –**

- **St Gwendoline's Churchyard – Health & Safety Audit & Survey on Trees in the Churchyard** – **RESOLVED:** To use some of the Churchyard reserves for the Health & Safety Audit work and for the Survey on the Trees.

*Note - Cllr R Reid left the meeting due to technical issues.*

- **Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations** - Actual cost for medals approx. £1,200 for Talgarth Primary School children. It appears PCC does not have funds for this. Noted £1,000 had previously been agreed at our 6 Jan 2022 meeting.

- **Town Hall Curtains & Redecoration**—£13,644 & Redecoration of Town Hall £7,000.

These last 2 items are one off costs- Discussion took place

**RESOLVED:** To include in Precept figures 2022/2023.

**PROJECTED TOTAL EXPENDITURE 2022/2023** **£72,085.00**

**PROJECTED INCOME 2021/2022** **£64,466.69**

**Budget Projection Precept Form 2022/2023** – completed as per attached.

Cllr A Lord proposes we raise the precept by a minimum of £6,000. Cllr M Dodds seconds this proposal.

A second proposal by Cllr A Bufton to raise the precept by £8,000 – Cllr W Powell seconds this proposal.

Cllr A Lord agreed with the second proposal and withdrew his first proposal.

**RESOLVED:** Unanimously agreed that the Precept be set at **£62,000 for 2022/2023.**

**Note - Cllr R Reid re-joined meeting** – Cllr R Reid confirmed he is also in agreement to increase the Precept by £8,000 to £62,000.

Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, on behalf of the Town Council, thanked Cllr A Lord for his valued assistance in preparing these figures and notes for discussion with Town Councillors, in order to set the Precept for 2022/2023.

- **Town Hall & Burial Fees** – It was noted that the cost of Town Hall hire charges and Burial fees, need to be closely scrutinized. Discussion took place and Cllr A Lord agreed to work out a realistic Town Hall hourly hire fee, based on energy costs.

**RESOLVED:** Clerk to re-circulate current hire charges for the Town Hall and St Gwendoline’s Churchyard fees and also comparative Powys County Council Cemetery and neighbouring Community Council charges and to discuss at a meeting – date tbc.

*Note - Cllr M Dodds left the meeting*

Town Councillors were acutely aware of the financial pressures being faced by fellow local residents, with likely increases to come in Powys County Council Tax demands, including the Dyfed Powys Police and Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority Precepts. This was a major factor for Town Councillors in their deliberations in determining their Precept level 2022/2023. It was a unanimous decision that the Town Council Precept for 2022/2023 be increased by £8,000 to meet the increasing demands.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**22/24 King George V Pavilion** - Cllr A Bufton reported that he has been requested to call at the Pavilion as the Football Club wishes to change the main entrance to the back of the building onto the Westfields Road side, which would involve some hedge removal. Noted that Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, had also been approached regarding this matter.  
**RESOLVED:** Cllr Bufton to report back to the 7 Feb meeting.

**22/25 V W Cleaning Services** – Increase in hourly rate from January invoice £12.12. to £14.50 per hour with no increase in April. Open toilets increase from £9.53 per hour to £10.95.  
**RESOLVED:** To agree to this increase, in the meantime, and to advertise for a new Cleaner, as soon as possible.

**22/26 DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING** - 7 pm Wed 9 February 2022.

**There was no further business to be discussed and the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.36 pm.**

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....