

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Town Council on Monday 10th  
January 2022 at 7.00pm**

**Present**

**St Michael's Ward**

Cllr J Bonetta  
Cllr L Dolby  
Cllr T Howard  
Cllr H Hurford  
Cllr A McCollum  
Cllr J McNally  
Cllr D Munge  
Cllr A Proszowska  
Cllr J Taylor  
Cllr J Zarczynski (Chairman)

**St Paul's Ward**

Cllr P Carrigan  
Cllr K Cloke  
Cllr C Gilson  
Cllr S Keene  
Cllr S Sexton

**In attendance**

Stephen Hill, Town Clerk  
Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk  
3 members of the public (in person)  
16 members of the public (via zoom)

**21/299 Apologies for absence**

Cllr R Coombs - Personal  
Cllr F Hanratty - Personal  
Cllr V Howard – Personal  
Cllr P Twiss (EDDC/DCC)

The Town Clerk advised that he had received Cllr Vera Howard's resignation and that this would be an agenda item for the meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 together with a proposal for Cllr Howard to be nominated as an Honoured Citizen of Honiton.

**21/300 Declarations of Interests**

Cllr J Bonetta (Item 21/303)  
Cllr T McCollum (Item 21/303)  
Cllr S Sexton (Item 21/303)

**21/301 Dispensations**

There were no grants of dispensation made by the Town Clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

**21/302 Public Question Time for items on the agenda**

There were no public questions.

**21/303 Budget 22/23**

Cllr Carrigan put forward a motion to amend the proposed budget for 22/23.

*That the budget be reduced by approximately £147,000 to approximately £300,000 which is similar to the budget which was passed for 2021/22. This would enable the Council to agree to no increase in the precept for 2022/23.*

Cllr Taylor seconded the motion.

A recorded vote was taken:

For: Carrigan, Dolby, Gilson, McNally, Taylor, Zarczynski

Against: Bonetta, Cloke, Hurford, T Howard, Keene, McCollum, Munge, Proszowska, Sexton.

The motion was lost 6/9

Cllr Howard as Chair of the Finance & Policy Committee responded ([click here](#)).

The motion was debated and the following points were made:

- there was no need to increase the staffing budget
- the increase proposed was excessive and that no increase was being proposed next year as it was an election year.
- the youth budget had not been reduced or removed previously and the current reserves were twice the legal requirement.
- The proposed budget would allow the Council to be more resilient and build forwards and better after the pandemic.
- In 2019/20 the reserves had an additional £30,000
- The proposed budget would allow the Council to implement projects for the town to include regeneration of the High Street, Tourism, increased grants.
- The proposed budget was a community budget and would protect the Town Council and the town.
- The increase was necessary as there had been no increases over the last few years.
- There was no need to increase the budget as projects such as the allotments, ditching and drainage works, additional grant payments,

the Christmas lights had all been delivered last year without an increase in the precept.

- The cost of living was increasing, and families were already struggling.
- The precept would automatically increase as there would be at least 200 new houses built.
- The proposed budget was the product of in depth discussions by all the Committees and would enable projects to take place which will benefit the residents of Honiton.
- HTC had never previously increased its budget by more than 12%. National government were taken action to assist with the rising cost of living. The projects proposed were supported but it was not the time to increase the budget to fund them.
- Reserves are sufficient to meet the statutory requirements. Anything more than this should be paused whilst residents deal with a higher cost of living
- Honiton cannot be compared to other towns in Devon as Honiton is unique and has different needs.
- The reserves could be impacted by ongoing legal matters.
- The Town Clerk had received three letters objecting to the increase in the budget.

**a) Members RESOLVED to approve the budget 22/23**

Proposed by Cllr Sexton and seconded by Cllr Proszowska

For: Bonetta, Cloke, Hurford, T Howard, Keene, McCollum, Munge, Proszowska, Sexton

Against: Carrigan, Dolby, Gilson, McNally, Taylor, Zarczynski

**b) Members RESOLVED to approve the Precept 22/23 at £437,375.00**

Proposed by Cllr T Howard and seconded by Cllr Keene

For: Bonetta, Cloke, Hurford, T Howard, Keene, McCollum, Munge, Proszowska, Sexton

Against: Carrigan, Dolby, Gilson, McNally, Taylor, Zarczynski

Cllr Zarczynski made a statement reiterating his opposition to the increase in the precept and advised that in protest he did not wish to proceed with the meeting. Cllr Zarczynski left the meeting at 19.29pm. Cllrs Carrigan, Gilson, Dolby, Taylor and McNally also left the meeting at 19.29pm

The Town Clerk advised that the meeting could continue but that the Members remaining would need to elect a Chairman for the remainder of the meeting as the Vice-Chair had also left.

**Members RESOLVED unanimously to elect Cllr Sexton as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.**

Proposed by Cllr McCollum and seconded by Cllr Hurford.

**21/304 Work programme and Prioritisation**

The Town Clerk presented the report.  
Members discussed the proposed work programme.

**Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve the work programme.**

Proposed by Cllr Hurford and seconded by Cllr Cloke.

**21/305 To close the meeting.**

The meeting was closed at 19.35pm.