

**WESTBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**AT THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE LAVERTON,  
BRATTON ROAD, WESTBURY, ON MONDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2013 AT 7.00 PM.**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Mrs S Ezra (Chairman).

**Cllrs S Andrews, D Bradshaw, I Cunningham, M Cuthbert-Murray,  
R Hawker, D Jenkins, G King, S Miles, Mrs C Mitchell, M Sutton and  
W D Tout.**

**Mr K R Harvey, Town Clerk  
Mrs B Mantle**

**Also in attendance: Mr D Kemp, DCK Beavers Ltd**

**T.2779 PUBLIC FORUM:** Nil.

**T.2780 ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE:**

|                   |   |                   |
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| Cllr Mrs D O'Hara | - | Personal          |
| Cllr F Morland    | - | Clash of meetings |
| Cllr D Windess    | - | Work commitment   |

**T.2781 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Cllr S Andrews – Agenda item 6. (Member of the Leigh Park Community Association.

Cllr I Cunningham – Agenda item 4. (Budget 2013/14 – Grant to Westbury Music & Arts Festival - Member)

Cllr R Hawker – Agenda item 6. (Member of the Leigh Park Community Association)

Cllr G King – Agenda item 4. (Budget 2013/14 – Grant to Crosspoint - Member)

Cllr S Miles – Agenda item 4. (Assistant Director, Westbury Music & Arts Festival).

**T.2782 WILTSHIRE COUNCILLORS' REPORTS.**

Wiltshire Cllr Hawker – The timetable and route of the Westbury Weaver Bus will be discussed at the forthcoming Westbury Community Area Board meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> February.

**T.2783 DRAFT BUDGET 2013-2014.**

- a. Department for Communities and Local Government Proposals on Localising Support for Council Tax, and Wiltshire Council – Town/Parish Precepts 2013/14 – Revised Tax Base.**  
(The Town Clerk confirmed all dispensations have been signed.)

Mr D Kemp, DCK Beavers Ltd reported as follows:

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Up until Financial year 2012/13 the impact of the non levy of council tax on benefit claimants had been totally funded by central government by way of a grant to principle authorities to offset this. In July 2012 the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) decided to change the rules. This effectively passed the responsibility for coping with the impact of the benefit payments on the collection of council tax down to collecting authorities. This has a knock-on effect on the Town Council precept. In effect they have passed some money down instead of fully funding this impact. The funding passed down represents 90% of grant for 2012/13. Funding was passed down in two separate tranches: one to cover impact on principal authorities, and the second to cover the impact on town and parish councils, which came with no restrictions, ie not ring fenced. Wiltshire Council has passed this grant down to towns and parishes. The impact of the real change is that the tax base over which the precept is calculated has also gone down. One should compensate the other, but it is not that simple. The figures for Westbury Town Council suggest that there is a residual detrimental impact on Westbury's precept calculations of about 0.5%.

There have been other changes because each principal authority had to come up with its own local scheme to minimise the impact. Wiltshire Council has based their precept support grant, which directly comes off the Town Council's precept request, to leave a lower amount to be spread over a lower tax base.

Budget calculations: at 2.32% Westbury Town Council's increase is under CPI inflation. If these changes had not happened this would have translated to a 1.8% per Band D household, but is now a 2.32% increase in Band D.

For 2013/14 DCLG could have imposed a cap on town and parish councils, but did not do so. We do not know for future years as to whether we will continue to receive the support grant, or how much it will be. There are no guarantees on this. The worse case is that we get nothing for 2014/15, in which case Westbury Town Council would lose the £49,000 grant. Some parish councils are attempting not to use the support grant, but to put it to one side in case they need it for future years.

Following questions from members, Mr Kemp explained that the tax base is a town wide calculation of the number of properties in Westbury expressed as a Band D equivalent. Each property is a factor of a Band D equivalent. Up until 2012/13 that was the total number of households less an allowance only for non collection of bad debts and reduction of second home discounts etc. Under the new basis that is reduced by the non collection from people who are on benefits. Although dependent upon how Wiltshire divides up the Government grant between towns and parishes, it will probably be factored by the impact of benefit claimants in any particular area.

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Mr Kemp further informed that the CPI rate in September was 2.2%, and an increase in the Precept of £20,000 would result in a 8.99% increase.

- b. Draft Budget 2013-2014.** It was RESOLVED to adopt the Budget for 2013/14 as submitted.

- T.2784** It was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the public and press be temporarily excluded and instructed to withdraw.
- T.2785** NOTICE OF MOTION received from the CCTV Working Group dated the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013.  
  
APPROVED.
- T.2786** NOTICE OF MOTION received from the CCTV Working Group dated the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013.  
  
APPROVED.
- T.2787** LAVERTON DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING OFFICER.
- T.2788** It was resolved to return to open council.

7.55 pm

Signed on behalf of the meeting  
this fourth day of March 2013

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Chairman

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