
LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TASK & FINISH GROUP

Minutes of the Budget Development Task & Finish Group meeting held on Thursday 13th September 2018 commencing at 14:00 hours in the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Marsh (Chair), Mr P Davies, Murdoch, Rumsey, Sutcliffe and Williams.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk

BTF01/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

BTF02/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

BTF03/18 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

BTF04/18 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

BTF05/18 CORPORATE PLAN/MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP)

The Task & Finish Group received an overview of both the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

It had been recommended by the Personnel Sub-Committee that both the above documents should be formally considered at the Full Council meeting on 26th November 2018, rather than at the Full Council meeting in September 2018. An interim review of the amended documents would be undertaken by the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on Monday 29th October 2018.

It was noted that a number of assumptions had been made when setting the draft Medium Term Financial Plan. These included the following:

- The growth in Leominster's Tax base for the next four years has been set at 1.15% for the purposes of the MTFP;
- Salary increases have been set at 2%;
- The budget projections and precept increases until 2022/23 have been based on a 2.5% inflationary increase and a 1.15% tax base increase.

It was suggested that Council may wish to consider one of the following options and revise the initial MTFP assumptions outlined above:

- No precept increase in 2019/20 but excluding a PWLB loan and the repayments;

- No precept increase in 2019/20 but with a PWLB loan and the repayments included;
- A precept increase in 2019/20 but excluding a PWLB loan and the repayments. The precept increase could be between 2.5% and 5%, in line with Herefordshire Council increase;
- A precept increase in 2019/20 but with a PWLB loan and the repayments included. The precept increase could be between 2.5% and 5%, in line with Herefordshire Council increase.

The following amendments to the Corporate Plan were recommended:

- The Section 4 table to be moved into the appendices;
- A general statement of achievements to date and the ramifications of the reduction in grant support over the past four years. Cllr Marsh was currently developing this section;
- The development of a policy under the Environment Targets to include the desire of the Town Council to take responsibility for the management and maintenance of the green spaces in new developments in Leominster through asset transfer;
- The securing of S106 funding (currently part of the Planning & Highways Targets) to help fund the management and maintenance of the green open spaces and the provision of play facilities;
- The development of a policy to undertake the works previously carried out by the Lengthsman and P3 schemes;
- The development of a policy to undertake additional grass cutting responsibilities in Leominster;
- Provide an overview of the existing open space infrastructure being managed and maintained by the Town Council;
- Under the Planning & Highway Targets to develop a policy to outline the Town Council's support and its future efforts to try to secure more social housing provision in Leominster.

The Task & Finish Group noted that due to the delay agreed in principle to requesting a PWLB loan, the refurbishment of the holiday flat, which should be completed by the end of October 2018, would have to be funded from the Council's capital receipt fund, as it would be inappropriate to borrow for the project retrospectively. This would obviously have ramifications on both the MTFP and the Council's reserves.

Due to the discussions undertaken during the meeting, Members were informed that any recommendation to vary the PWLB loan must be made through a Motion that would be placed on the appropriate agenda. The Motion would need to have a proposer and a seconder and be submitted to the Town Clerk in writing by Monday 19th November 2018.

The amount of loan that would be required to undertake the projects outlined in the PWLB report will now exclude the holiday flat, which would be completed by the time a decision regarding a loan was made.

The following revisions to the project list and the PWLB report would be provided and consulted on in the next month:

- The cost of a loan of £200,000, £195,000 and £125,000, based over a 10 year, a 15 year and a 25 year repayment period;
- Clarification and further advice on the state of the play equipment and surfacing at the Grange Open Space;
- Providing the opportunity for members to input on pursuing the master plan proposal for the grange open space;
- Providing the opportunity for members to input on the timing of refurbishment of the public conveniences, especially the facility at the Grange.

BTF06/18 2019/20 BUDGET

The draft 2019/20 Budget would be reviewed once Full Council had set its policy on the following matters:

- Which projects it wished to develop;
- The amount and length of the proposed Public Works Loan Board Loan;
- The range of services it would deliver from 2019/20 onwards.

BTF07/18 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE 2019/20

The timetable was noted.

BTF08/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Budget Development Task & Finish Group would be held on Friday 19th October 2018 at 14:00 hours at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12:00 noon.

CHAIR:

DATE: