

LONGDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee of Longden Parish Council held on Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 10:00am at Longden Parish Hall. The meeting was to review the Budget recommendations for consideration by Full Council. (The meeting start time was delayed by 30 minutes to ensure a quorum could be achieved).

Caroline Higgins
Parish Clerk

Present: Cllrs P Carter, C Rigby, R Evans, N Evans & C Roberts (Chair)

1. **Election of Chairman** - Cllr Catherine Roberts was unanimously elected to serve as Committee Chair until the next Annual Meeting of the Council
2. **Public Participation Session** – There were no members of the public present.
3. **Apologies for absence** – Following a short delay, all members were present.
4. **Declarations of Interest** – None
5. **Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting** - The minutes of the previous budget meeting, held on 22nd November 2023, (which had been confirmed as accurate at the Full Council meeting in December 2023) were approved and signed by the Chair.
6. **Budget 2024 – 2025**
 - i) To review expenditure to date against the 2024 – 2025 budget and note the projected outturn at the end of March 2025 – The Receipts and Payments Forecasting report showing a projected surplus of £19,298 was reviewed. It was noted that the majority of the surplus could be attributed to the unbudgeted CIL Neighbourhood Fund receipt of £17,350 with the remainder being due to higher than budgeted income from savings interest.
 - ii) To note the current reserves position and any committed expenditure - The Reserves Balance Report was reviewed and it was noted that the general reserve currently exceeds 12 months Net Revenue Expenditure, however the forecasted spend and year end transfers to Earmarked Reserves will reduce this total to an acceptable level.
 - iii) To consider the draft 2025 – 2026 budget and agree recommendations to the Parish Council –

- a. Cllr R Evans provided a provisional Tax Base calculation for 2025/26 of 558.75 Band D equivalents (subject to confirmation by Shropshire Council). This represents a small decrease in the tax base compared to the previous year, which will have the effect of increasing the Band D Precept value even if the Precept remains unchanged.
- b. The Committee considered the draft revenue budget line by line and made the following recommendations:
 - i. Training – Code 20 – Transfer unspent budget to EMR and reduce 25/26 budget to £100
 - ii. Neighbourhood Plan – Code 46 – Reduce budget to £2,000 and use general reserve for any overspend (estimated spend £5,000)
 - iii. Remove ‘contingency’ from code 28 and retain budget for Community Grants, which shall be promoted.
 - iv. Village Maintenance – Code 26 – Reduce budget to £50 as sign cleaning recovered from Environmental Maintenance Grant
 - v. Interest – Code 36 – Increase budgeted income to £3,000
 - vi. Defibrillator – Code 32 – Increase budget to £1,000 to allow for relocation of Longden defibrillator (Old Post Office on sale) in addition to replacement of pads and batteries as required.
- c. The Committee considered the risks of unallocated CIL funding being recovered if held for more than 5 years and made the following recommendations
 - i. Play Area Path – Code 50 (new) – Reduce budget to zero and allocate CIL Neighbourhood Funds / seek grant funding for estimated £3,000 project cost
 - ii. Consider allocating a sum from the unallocated CIL Neighbourhood Fund to provide a bus shelter at Lyth Hill, (subject to the Connect On Demand service being retained by Shropshire Council)
 - iii. Consider allocating a sum from unallocated CIL to support a community bid to purchase the Tankerville Arms as a Community Asset, (subject to due diligence).
 - iv. Consider allocating a sum from unallocated CIL for an additional defibrillator in the Exfords Green / Lower Common areas (subject to identifying a power supply and publicly accessible location)

d. The Committee concluded a budget of **£43,136.12**, would be required in 2025/26 (an increase of £4,283 above 2024/25 Precept of £38,853).

iv) To recommend a Precept sufficient to cover the budget proposed - The Committee recommended that the Council use £3,300 of their projected surplus savings interest to reduce the impact on the Precept. They recommended a Precept of **£39,836** be requested for 2025/26.

v) Subject to confirmation of the provisional Tax Base of 558.75, this would result in a Band D property annual Precept of £71.29, (an increase of 3%).

Signed (Committee Chair) Date