

Minutes of the Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council Finance and Resource Committee held on Wednesday 16th January 2013 @ 19.30, Parish Room, Doddinghurst Road, Doddinghurst.

Present: Clrs. Mrs Dicker (Chairman), A. Farrow, G.W. Bateson, G. Smith, C Enderby

1. **Apologies for absence.** None absent
2. **Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda.** None declared but see below.
3. **Dispensations granted to discuss precept matters.** On the 7th December 2012 the monitoring officer for Brentwood Borough Council granted Disclosable Pecuniary Interest dispensations to all Councillors resident in the Parish enabling them to discuss and agree Parish Precept, else the council would be otherwise unable to act on the matter - see attached letter.
4. **Resolved:** Approved the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2012.
5. **Information:** Update on actions since last meeting. Doddinghurst SLA issued to Brentwood Borough Council (Brian Partridge - who promised to take up the matter at the next Parish Liaison Committee).
6. **Information:** 2013/14 Precept requirement assessment. Noted budget assessment carried out on the 10th October 2013. Noted also the changes to the Doddinghurst Council Tax base (CTB) arising as a result of changes by central government in housing benefit policy and that a temporary Local Council tax support (LCTS) scheme grant for Doddinghurst of £3,036.44 had been made for 2013/14 to compensate for the fall in CTB from 1250.60 to 1142.70. It was also noted that inflation was between 2.5% and 3.5%
7. **Resolved:** Approved the Finance and Resource committee 2013/14 precept recommendation to Full Council as a 2% increase on 2012/13 precept - resulting in an £0.84p per annum increase in Band D property.

This increase does not include the discretionary grant and therefore the increase in overall income is 1.55% . This increase is below government target inflation and below inflation increases for pensions at the end of April 2013. Moreover if LCTS is withdrawn next year the Parish Council would need to increase Precept by 6.8% to compensate so a small increase this year will help avoid larger step changes in future years (which could be also capped by central government), notwithstanding the fact that an increase of 1.55% on overall income is justified on inflationary pressures alone.

Finally, the Committee recorded its disappointment that Brentwood had ignored the Brentwood Partnership agreement for the second year running and the discretionary grant wasn't reflecting the costs of the parish as submitted in its claims for the past two years and had remained unchanged over this period having been halved over the previous 5 years. The Clerk is to write to the Head of Finance, Jo-Anne Ireland, to ask for a meeting to discuss the Partnership Agreement Service Level Agreement presented last year and the future of the Partnership Agreement.

8. Any Other Urgent Business strictly for information only.

- (i) Noted that the Clerk's PC was malfunctioning and may have to be replaced at short notice.
- (ii) Noted also that the Deputy Clerk's Contract of Employment is due to expire at the end of March 2013.

The meeting was closed at 20.30

Signed:

Dated: 20th March 2013