

**A MEETING OF ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDIUM WAS HELD AT
7.30pm ON TUESDAY 14 January 2014 IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM AT
GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER**

Present

The following Presidium members were present Cllr M Cargill (Mayor), Cllr Y Hine (Deputy Mayor), Cllr L Cumberbatch, Cllr C Gough, Cllr Neale-Sturgess, as an Observer, with C. Wright (Town Clerk) acting as clerk.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is allowed at the discretion of the Mayor on items on the agenda

1. Apologies

Apologies with reasons for absence have been received from Presidium member Cllr E Payne.

2. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received

3. Minutes of Last meetings

The clerk declared that due to the lateness of the meeting he was not asking members to consider for approval the minutes of previous meetings

4. Items for Consideration

The Clerk gave a report on the current financial position and explained changes that would impact on town council finances which included inflation and auto enrolment in pensions for some workers, which the clerk informed members would be advisable to bring into action in April following changes to the Pension system, rather than wait a further year until we would be required to do it by law. He explained the information supplied to each member on the spreadsheet print he had supplied and how the figures put forward were calculated. Consideration was made by members on future manning, particularly administration for inclusion in the Precept Calculation to provide a long term sustainable team and the introduction of the 'Strategic Planning Committee' as a new committee. Cllr Neale-Sturgess presented a draft 'Terms of Reference' for this committee which with minor modification was approved to go forward to Full Council for adoption. It was also agreed that Presidium would become more proactive with respect to the regularity of its meetings and that the Council Strategy and Policies should be part of its terms of reference. The Scrutiny Committee was also discussed, following discussions where it was explained by the Clerk that Scrutiny Committees were used by Higher tiers of Government to scrutinise decisions made by the cabinet and other committees that did not have to go through full council and after discussion it was decided the current role of Scrutiny could be done by Full Council as all major decisions had to be a proposition to full council. A Procedural Complaints procedure is in place, with the Clerk and Mayor having delegated powers and it was also decided this could be strengthened with the inclusion of other councillors on an adhoc basis should it be necessary. A Councillor could also ask the Clerk for an item to be included on the Council agenda which councillors are reminded of at every Full Council meeting.

5. Precept Calculation

The Clerk demonstrated the spread sheet information to show how the information recorded up till December was used to derive a forecast for end of year figures (green column) and then by taking into account the increases necessary where required such as inflation and pensions the probable income and expenditure for the coming year was determined (yellow column), which showed a minimum increase of 1.5% would be required. Following further discussion and scrutiny of the figures it was agreed that an increase of 2% (maximum) was more appropriate following a proposal by Cllr Hine, which was seconded by Cllr Cumberbatch. A vote was taken which was unanimous and it was agreed this was the figure to take to full council.

6. Proposition to Full Council

It was agreed the following propositions should be taken to Full Council to enable the Precept to be set for the forthcoming year:

'The draft Terms of Reference for the new Strategic Planning Committee be adopted starting from the Annual Meeting'.

'The new draft Terms of Reference for Presidium to be adopted starting from the Annual Meeting'.

'The Scrutiny Committee should not be included as an operational committee following the Annual Meeting'.

'The Precept, currently at £233,540 should be increased by 2% to £238,210 for the coming year'.