DRAFT

Minute of the FEOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 7th December 2023 at 7pm at Feock Parish Council Offices

Councillors present: WARDS CARNON DOWNS DEVORAN FEOCK

J Allen K Hambly-Staite

R Brickell

In attendance: Debra Roberts, Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

Chairman: Councillor Brickell

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chairman had given his apologies so the meeting was chaired by Cllr Brickell, Chair of the Parish Council.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Steel and Woolcock. The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

3. TO CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 6TH NOVEMBER 2023 AS A CORRECT RECORD OF THE MATERIAL DECISIONS MADE BY SIGNATURE BY THE CHAIRMAN

RESOLUTION: CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE PROPOSED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE 6TH NOVEMBER 2023 BE APPROVED AS A TRUE & ACCURATE RECORD WITH ONE CORRECTION TO AN ERROR IN ITEM 8 BUDGET - TO CORRECT THE BAND D FIGURE TO £70.88, SECONDED BY CLLR BRICKELL AND CARRIED.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public present.

6. CLERKS UPDATE ON ACTIONS PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no updates on actions.

7. BUDGET FOR 2024/25

8. PRECEPT FOR 2024/25

The Clerk explained that a few days after the Parish Council had met in November and agreed their budget and precept request for the next financial year, NALC and the NJC had confirmed the salary agreement for 2023/24, this was more than the Council had budgeted for during the current year and the Council had used that estimated budget salary figure to base the 2024/25 salary budget on, which was an increase of 4.5%

The Clerk and Chairman would make representations to CALC on the impact on smaller Councils of such large salary increases as there was concern about the challenge this would cause to services and staffing.

Cllr Hambly-Staite proposed that we reduce the paper issues of Connect newsletter to 1 a year instead of the 3 budgeted for as this would be a saving of £4429. Instead of 3 paper copies we could supplement these with emailed and electronic versions throughout the year, paper copies could still be delivered to those who were not online if requested and also paper copies could be put in the phonebox bookswaps, Doctors Surgery, Dentist and Tea Rooms, the same distribution as the Whats On. The March paper issue of Connect which was already included in the current financial year could be used to explain the new way of communication and encourage residents to sign up for the electronic newsletter.

Cllr Hambly-Staite said he had felt for some time that the Council needed to do more to promote to the public the services they provided and what they did for the public.

It was agreed for the Clerk to implement staff appraisals to get members of staffs ideas and input for how the Council could work more efficiently in the services it provides.

The Clerk explained that by reducing the issues of Connect in the budget from 3 to 1 a year and keeping the agreed precept for 2024/25 at £145,548 (a 3% increase on the current year), on the assumption that all projected income was received, this left the Council with £829 less at the end of the year than the budget previously agreed at the November meeting which was £3148 to go back into reserves.

The Clerk was asked to provide figures for if the precept was raised to leave the Council with the same amount left of £3148 as previously agreed and allowing for one paper copy of Connect to be issued in November/December.

The Clerk advised this would put up the precept to £146,377, a 3.58% increase, a band D property payment of the Parish Council element of the precept would be a 40p increase to £71.28 compared to £70.88 that had already been agreed by Full Council.

RESOLUTION: CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE PROPOSED THAT THE RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL BE THAT THE PRECEPT AMOUNT AND BUDGET HAD BEEN REVISITED AND THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE A 3.58% INCREASE GIVING A PRECEPT REQUEST FOR 2024/25 OF £146,377, SECONDED BY CLLR J ALLEN AND CARRIED.

There being no further business the meeting closed 7.20pm