

Minutes of the Parish Council Precept meeting held on Thursday 30th January 2014 in the Sherwood Room of Newstead Centre, Tilford Road, Newstead Village, commencing at 7.00pm.

1. **Councillors present:** Cllrs P A Wise (Chairman), Mr P Burnham, Ms H Crouch, Mr S Gascoigne and Mrs P Young.
2. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Cllrs D Adams and Mrs B Blood. Also Cllr P Andrews.
3. **Declarations of interest:**
No other interests were declared

4. **To Review Cemetery Charges for 2014/15**

Revised charges from A Clarke with effect from the 1. 1 .2014 had been circulated with the agenda. Cllrs requested the extent of additional charges which may be imposed by the gravedigger relating to oversize coffins and out of hours work. The Clerk explained that Mr Clarke preferred funeral services to be held no later than 3pm, as services held later would cause problems in filling the graves on dark winter evenings. The Clerk advised that additional charges would be ad hoc depending on the circumstances or size of coffin rather than a set amount each time. The list of present charges was then discussed and revised charges agreed as shown.

	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Non-Resident</u>
Purchase of a Deed of Right of Burial £650	£200	
Grave preparation fee for 6ft grave £710	£230	
Grave preparation fee for 8ft grave (for 2) £735	£250	
Re-open grave £500	£210	
Purchase of a Deed of Right of Burial £475	£150	
in the cremations section		
Burial of a casket in the cremations or burial sections £305	£115	
Erection of a headstone in the burial section £230	£80	
Additional inscription £105	£25	
Memorial on a cremation plot which must be no £230 more than 2ft in height	£80	

In order to allow time for the Clerk to write to all funeral directors, it was agreed that the new charges would be applicable from the start of the new financial year i.e. 1st April 2014.

5. To set the Precept for 2014/2015

A report by the Responsible Financial Officer on the Council's accounts had been attached with the agenda and a further sheet was handed out which highlighted the following changes:

- Since writing the report Gedling Borough Council had advised the tax base had been adjusted downwards from **346.42** to **345.14**. New figures were noted in respect of amount of precept to be collected
- Cllr Burnham had drawn attention to an amount of £150 the Council had pledged to contribute towards plants for the Old Cemetery and as a result the forecast figures for 2013/2014 in respect of **cemeteries and village maintenance** were increased from **£8,150** to **£8,300**

The Clerk then explained the sums allocated under various headings as outlined in her report to the Council. In respect of **Receipts** received by the Council, Gedling Borough Council had confirmed that a cash payment of **£2,321** would be paid to the Council to offset the reduction in the tax base as a result of the Local Government Finance Act. Income received in respect of cemetery fees was hard to predict and the amount shown in the **Forecast** assumed no further cremations/burials until the end of the financial year. The estimate for 2014/2015 was a best guess with funerals being split equally between residents and non residents. The **VAT refund** was cost neutral as whatever was paid out in VAT was claimed back in the same year. This figure had reduced as no large items of expenditure were forecast during the next financial year. **Bank interest** had been reduced to zero as the Council currently had no deposit account. The Clerk advised that as the new account established she would make further enquires with HSBC on deposit accounts and this action was agreed by Cllrs

In terms of **Payments**, the figures for 2014/2015 were noted as per the report by the RFO.

Councillors were pleased to note the reduction in **expenses**. It was noted that the figure under **cemeteries and village maintenance** did offer some scope for other work to be carried out. Cllr Young noted that as this heading also included money spent in other parts of the parish, it should be renamed as **cemeteries and parish maintenance** and this was agreed.

Cost in respect of **audit/insurance and subscriptions** were noted, whilst in respect of **room hire** costs for the 2014/2015, the Chairman explained the Newstead Centre was currently in the process of reviewing its fees and charges for room hire, which would undoubtedly mean a price increase.

Mr Burnham queried the budget under **S137/donations** and said in view of present cash restraints, he felt the figure of **£1,400** was too high and should be held at the same level as last year i.e **£1,225**. This was agreed by the other Cllrs present and the figures amended. The need for bodies to complete a grant application form in advance was also stressed rather than requests simply being presented to the Council on the day.

The Clerk also explained that since she had written her report, the possibility of parish councils being required to hold a referendum if the precept rise proposed was more than 2% had been reopened and NALC advised that a new judgement was due shortly. This meant that 2014-2015 could be the final year the Council could charge above a set amount without triggering the requirement to hold a referendum. In view of this Cllr Burnham proposed an increase in the precept of **10%**, however this proposal was not seconded by any other member of the Council. A motion to increase the precept by **5%** was proposed by Cllr P Young and was seconded by Cllr Gascoigne. A vote was taken with four out of five Cllrs in favour of increasing the precept by **5%**, with one against resulting in a total precept requirement of **£13,615**.

6. Items that the Chairman considers urgent.

None

7. Closure and Date of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 5th February commencing at 7.30pm.