

**Minutes of the Public Open Forum Held at the Trowell Parish Hall on
Tuesday 9th April 2019, at 7.15pm.**

Present - Cllrs. D. Pringle (Chairman), Mrs. M. Birkitt, Mrs. L. Harley, Mrs. C. McGann, G. Lockwood , Mrs. H. Cumberpatch, P. Singer, G. Cotton, Mrs. L. Ball B.E.M.(BBC), K. E. Rigby (BBC), J. Longdon (NCC), Mrs. J. Murden (TPC - Asst. To the Parish Clerk) & 1 member of the public.

Clerk - Mrs. A. K. Mitchell

Cllr. Pringle opened the meeting & thanked everyone for their attendance.

KER raised three questions with the Council:

1. He requested a brief explanation of the 16% rise in the 2019/2020 precept level.
2. He asked for an explanation for the reduction in reserves from the previous financial year.
3. He requested written confirmation of the total cost of the refurbishment & details of how this is being funded.

As Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, Cllr. Harley addressed these queries on behalf of the Council:

She advised that the precept increase equates to less than £10 per year to parishioners. She reported that the Council has worked hard to significantly increase lettings receipts at the Parish Hall in recent years.

The decision to increase the precept was not taken lightly but the Council no longer receives a grant from BBC each year & increased lettings has resulted in the need for increased staff numbers & the appointment of cleaners.

The Council has also been required to make increased pensions contributions. Other significant expenditure includes a new fridge for the kitchen & new office equipment.

The Council has secured funding of £80,700 from WREN towards the refurbishment project that is currently underway. The Council's contribution has come from the Council's "Parish Hall Long Term Projects Fund".

The Council has already secured some funding through grants for the planned car park resurfacing works & has two further grant applications currently under consideration by the providers.

It is planned to carry out maintenance to the three sections of the flat roof at the Parish Hall over the next 3 years after issues were identified in the Council's regular roof condition report that had been carried out earlier in the year.

The Council's computer hardware is need of upgrading in the near future.

To offset this the Assistant to the Clerk is endeavouring to increase the lettings levels at the Parish Hall, the capacity for which will be greatly improved following the completion of the current refurbishment with the new layout allowing more flexibility.

The money that was in the reserves has been invested in the fabric of the Parish Hall.

KER commented that he had reviewed the latest accounts reported & advised Members to monitor the General Administration cost code as there is currently an overspend on this heading. He added that there are 3 main assets in Trowell, The Festival Inn, the Church & the Parish Hall.

LH agreed with this adding that although the hall is an asset, it is also a drain on resources & so the Council had had to bite the bullet on this occasion.

It was noted that there were no further questions forthcoming from the floor & so the Open Forum was closed at 7.25pm