

FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016–17

The Finance, Governance and Policy Committee (FG&P) comprises the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council together with the Chairman of the Planning Committee and two other parish councillors. Other councillors with a specific interest in items being considered by the FG&P Committee are encouraged to attend its meetings to make their views known.

The committee normally meets six times a year - all meetings being open to the public.

An additional meeting was once again held during the year to finalise budgets for the parish and to recommend a precept for the year 2017–2018. The recommendation was subsequently accepted by the Parish Council. It was to increase King's Sutton Parish Council's share of council tax due to be collected in 2017-2018 to £59,720. This is the equivalent of an additional £1.42 a year (2%) for a Band D property, from £70.63 to £72.05.

As its title suggests, the committee's main responsibilities are to consider and make recommendations to the full parish council on financial, governance and policy matters.

During the past year this work has included: -

- the preparation of the draft budget and precept
- the regular examination of all council payments and receipts
- the review of the effectiveness of internal control arrangements which is informed by the quarterly internal control checks now carried out by Councillor Roger Burne, to whom the committee is most grateful
- the review of recommendations relating to the allocation of Section 106 and other grant monies
- the review of various contracts for services such as grass cutting and litter services
- the consideration of applications for financial assistance from village individuals/groups
- the examination, preparation and confirmation of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- the consideration of financial and contractual arrangements for the carrying out of various amenity projects

Financial support for the weekly 'Thursday Bus' service was once again considered and a survey of users was carried out. The Committee noted that the net cost to the King's Sutton Parish Council had been amounting to around £3,500 per annum and that this sum was rising because of the dwindling number of users. The Committee therefore recommended, and the Council subsequently agreed, that:

- the service should be reduced from weekly to fortnightly as from January 1st 2017
- the fare should be increased from £2 to £3 and

- provision of the service should be reviewed once again in the autumn of 2017.

During the year consideration has been given to carrying out improvements to and refurbishment of the paths at the King's Sutton Cemetery and it is expected that, by the time of the Annual Parish Meeting, a decision will have been made to award the contract for this work to be carried out. These costs are to be paid for out of general reserves. Moves were also continued to pursue the possibility of acquiring land to extend the Cemetery.

The Committee's proposal that consideration should be given to seeking approval for the number of King's Sutton councillors to be reduced to a number more in line with the size of councils found in other equivalent parishes in South Northamptonshire was accepted by the Parish Council and South Northants Council is planning to review such issues across the District in the coming year.

The Committee's various recommendations for the disbursement of Section 106 monies have been accepted by the Parish Council, as have recommendations for the use of the New Homes Bonus accruing to the Parish as a result of the increase in the number of houses in the village. The main beneficiaries agreed during the year have been:-

- King's Sutton Millennium Memorial Hall – for equipment for use by hall users
- St Peter and St Paul Church – for sound equipment
- King's Sutton Playing Fields Association – for equipment to be used by clubs and for general improvements to the pavilion
- King's Sutton Pre School Playgroup – as a contribution towards new premises.

In carrying out the various tasks allotted to it, the committee has relied very heavily on the expertise, advice and work of the Parish Clerk who is also the council's Responsible Finance Officer. The Committee and I wish to thank her for her excellent and efficient support in dealing with all of these issues.

Ronnie Irving

Chairman Finance Governance and Policy Committee 2016/17