

CREECH ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes for the Meeting of Crech St Michael Parish Council Finance Committee held at Crech St Michael Village Hall on **Wednesday 18 December 2024 at 7.00pm**

Councillor Attendance

Cllr. David Griffin - Chair	DG	Present	Cllr. Neil Davidson	ND	Present
Cllr. Paul Tucker	PT	Present			

Also Present: Andrew Williams, Crech St Michael Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

Meeting started at 7.00pm

1.0	Chair's welcome DG welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that there were no members of the public present or online via Zoom.				
2.0	Public Question time - Questions asked by the Public and Press will be noted. None.				
3.0	Apologies for absence				
	3.1 To receive apologies for absence. Apologies had been received by Cllr. Peters.				
	3.2 To approve any apologise for absence. [M] Cllr. Peters absence was approved.				
	Prop: PT	Sec: DG	In Favour:3	Against:0	Abstain:0
4.0	Declarations of Interests				
	4.1 Declarations of Individual Members None.				
	4.2 Dispensation Request None.				
5.0	Minutes				
	To Review and Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024. [M] The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.				
	Prop: DG	Sec:ND	In Favour:3	Against:0	Abstain:0
	Items for Decision				
6.0	Budget 2025/26 – to consider and approve for recommendation a budget for the 2025/26 financial year. [M] The Clerk and RFO confirmed that the budget for the 2025/26 financial year was approved by a majority at the most recent Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2 December 2024. It was explained that unless that decision as overturned, the Finance Committee could only modify the budget within the broad boundaries that had been agreed. The Precept request				

was yet to be approved and the Finance Committee could propose that this is adjusted, using funds from reserves to reduce the precept request.

The Clerk and RFO presented data on Parish Council reserves held by similar sized parish councils in Somerset. It was noted that the Parish Council reserves were comparable with similar size parishes within Somerset.

DG confirmed that in his view setting a balanced budget that was the right approach to take. He believed that continuing to draw from reserves to balance the budget was not sustainable. DG stated that he felt that the proposed increase in the precept request for the average band D property was affordable.

PT agreed that continuing to draw on reserves was not sustainable and unless the approach was changed reserves would soon be depleted.

The Clerk and RFO reminded members that if saving were to be made, the most likely targets for reduction were the £10,00.00 allocated to highways, the £5,000.00 allocated to the Rec. Park project and the sum of £4,300.00 allocated to the LCN Youth Project. Other areas of expenditure could deliver some savings, but these would be very limited.

DG asked if future expenditure had to be approved. The Clerk and RFO confirmed that with the exception of the pre-approved items such as salaries and utilities all expenditure would be approved by the Parish Council.

DG felt that the Parish Council should be taking the initiative on local matters when Somerset Council is reducing services. PT agreed that highways was one of the most important matters for local residents. The Clerk and RFO stated that it was important that the Parish Council had funds to allow us to undertake key projects to support the community, for example helping with flooding alleviation.

It was agreed that the funding for the LCN youth project was important, as it represented an investment in a key group and support the work of the LCN.

It was agreed that the £5,000.00 allocated to fund the project for the Rec. Park evaluation would be deferred and if needed would be drawn from reserves. It was also agreed that the Finance Committee would prepare a plan for the use of Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

The committee agreed a recommendation to the Parish Council to approve a precept request of £118,075.00.

Prop:DG	Sec:ND	In Favour:3	Against:0	Abstain:0
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Other Matters

7.0 **Correspondence**

7.1 To consider any correspondence received that Councillors wish to raise that has already been circulated.

None.

	<p>7.2 To note items of correspondence received by the Clerk and RFO deemed appropriate to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council.</p> <p>None.</p>
8.0	<p>New Matters to be Carried Forward</p> <p>None.</p>

The meeting ended at 7.42pm

[V] = Where a resolution (vote) is expected

Andrew Williams, CSM PC, Clerk and RFO, 07708 680797, email clerk@creechstmichael.net

The next Creech St Michael (CSM) Parish Council meetings are on:

6 January 2024

at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall

