

MINUTES OF SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING IN COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2018 AT 3.30 P.M.

Chair: Eamon Aylward.

Cllrs: Tomás Breathnach, John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Fidelis Doherty, Matt Doran, Michael Doyle, David Fitzgerald, Pat Fitzpatrick, Joe Malone, Michael McCarthy, Pat Millea, Malcolm Noonan & Michael Shortall

Officials: Colette Byrne, Martin Prendiville, Tim Butler, Sean McKeown, Mary J. Mulholland, Michael Delahunty & Anne Maria Walsh.

Apologies: Cllrs. Breda Gardner, Patrick O'Neill, Ger Frisby & David Kennedy.

Draft Budget 2019

Mr. Martin Prendiville gave a PowerPoint Presentation to the Members. In his presentation he gave an overview on the following:

- Timetable for Budget 2019.
- Current Financial Position of the Council.
- Funding available for 2019, Income Analysis and Rates Income.
- Key issues for 2019.
- Current deficit on draft Budget 2019.
- Detailed analysis of the services where changes have occurred since 2018 on Service Division A to J.
- Options to meet deficit of €311k.
- Review of strike off for vacant properties.
- Review of compensation for Prompt Payment of Rates.
- Option to increase Commercial Rates ARV.

Mr. Prendiville concluded his presentation and advised Members that the deficit as of today is €311k. This has been reduced from €2.35m over the last few weeks.

Cllr. Eamon Aylward advised Members that the purpose of this meeting is to allow an opportunity for Members to clarify issues and make suggestions on how to fund €311k in order to balance the draft Budget 2018. The draft Budget booklet will have to be issued to the Members by 13th November, 2018. The statutory Budget meeting is set for Friday, 23rd November, 2018 at 3.00 p.m.

Contributions/queries were received from Cllrs. Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Maurice Shortall, Fidelis Doherty, Malcolm Noonan, Tomás Breathnach, John Brennan, Michael Doyle, Pat Millea, Eamon Aylward, Pat Fitzpatrick, Matt Doran and David Fitzgerald.

The issues raised by Members are as follows:

- Decision on LPT should be at the same time as consideration of Budget.
- Cost of Coroners.
- Concerns on reducing strike off on vacant premises, need to encourage re-use.
- Christmas Festival - sources of income.
- Reduction in contribution to Kilkenny Archives.
- Re-distribution of funds from City to Rural areas.
- Castlecomer Discovery Park allocation.
- Town & Village Renewal - requirement for matching funds.
- Sports Capital Grants.
- Clarify recoument from Irish Water.
- Provision for Capital Balances every year.

- Contribution to Medieval Mile Museum, Watergate & Rothe House.
- Control of dogs expenditure.
- Recoupment of Pay Restoration costs.
- Provision for vacancies in the Fire Service.
- Prompt Payment Incentive for Rates.
- National Rent Scheme - update.
- Reduction in HAP income.
- Reduction in Tourism salaries.
- Heritage Council Grants.
- Graveyard Grants.
- Sports Partnership.
- Additional costs on CAS per year in the Revenue Budget.
- Update on Car Park for Abbey Quarter site.
- Cost of responding to FOI & AIE requests.
- Further reduction to be made on Callan Friary Trust, Museum, Dail na nOg, Foroige, Recycling Centres.
- Increase in Rates to fund deficit.
- Any further income on Planning Fees, Housing Rent.
- Amenity Grants - need to provide more funding.

Mr. Prendiville, Mr. Butler and Ms. Mulholland responded in detail to all the issues raised. They advised Members of the budget requirement for a number of services where commitments have already been made and we are contractually committed to these.

Mr. Prendiville advised on the following:

- reducing the Prompt Payment Incentive on Rates from 5% to 3% would yield €70k.
- reduce strike off on vacant properties from 100% to 90% would yield €180k.

Ms. Colette Byrne advised that there has been many challenges in preparing this budget. Members received a report in September 2018 before the decision was made on the Local Property Tax outlining that approx. €2m was required to balance a draft budget for 2019.

She further recommended that after the local elections in 2019, the newly elected Council needs to decide on a five year strategy to raise additional income for projects that are being planned. There are significant challenges to be met if the Council wants to proceed with projects. These projects will need to be funded from the Revenue and Capital Account borrowing and a balance is required.

Ms. Byrne asked if there is consensus among the Members to make reductions in the Prompt Payment Incentive Scheme, the rate strike off and increase the ARV.

Following discussion the Members stated that an increase in the ARV was not acceptable. The reduction in the other two were acceptable.

Cllr. Aylward advised that Management will now complete the work on balancing the budget and will look at other areas to fund the remaining deficit.

Members again asked if consideration could be given to increasing the provision for Amenity Grants.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE