**Minutes of the Saddleworth Parish Council Extraordinary Finance Committee held on Tuesday 7th January 2025 at 7pm at the Civic Hall, Uppermill.**

**Present**: Cllr S Al-Hamdani (Chairman)

 Cllr G Sheldon (Vice Chairman), Cllr H Bishop, Cllr R Blackmore, Cllr L Thompson,

Cllr P Walsh, RFO: Mr J Price, Clerk: Mrs K Allott.

**679. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr K Barton Cllr L Dawson, Cllr K. Phillips,

**680. Declarations of Interest:** None declared

**681. Minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 14th November 2024**

The minutes were accepted as correct and signed at the meeting by the Chairman. Proposed Cllr Blackmore, seconded Cllr Al-Hamdani.

**682. To finalise the Budget 2025-26, reserves draw down and Precept request**

The budget changes from the first draft budget proposed at the previous Finance and Asset Management meetings has been populated into the budget sheets by the RFO and these figures had been shared prior to the meeting. A summary sheet with different scenarios had also been shared. These were discussed.

It was agreed the RFO would provide a report of the total reserves held as at the end December 24 for the next meeting.

There was some discussion around using some of the income from the cemetery to fund the budget shortfall this year, with the remainder being added to earmarked reserves. Councillors agreed this must not be done on a regular basis as these reserves would be needed for future upkeep of the cemetery.

It was agreed the Asset Management Committee, with the support of the Clerk and RFO, would be tasked to carry out an exercise to project how much funding will be required over the next 20 years to ensure the cemetery is fully maintained in the future.

Final adjustments to the draft 2025-26 budget were agreed as follows:

The £10,000 allocated for flooring refurbishment (new carpet) in Repairs be removed – this will be revisited if funds allow in 2025-26.

£1,643 would be transferred from the budgeted cemetery surplus income into earmarked cemetery reserves with the reduction of £2,645 from the original £4,288 used to support the total budget shortfall.

£12,000 would be taken from general reserves.

It was proposed that the final net total budget be agreed at £294,631.

These proposals result in a 5% precept increase request from the current £27.01 to a proposed £28.36 for 2025-26.

It was agreed this budget be recommended to full Council for approval.

Proposed Cllr Al-Hamdani, seconded Cllr Sheldon, carried.

The proposed budget report will be shared with all Councillors in advance of the Ordinary Council meeting being held on Monday 27th January 2025.

The RFO advised now the budget had been agreed his next priority would be concentrating on the VAT issue and it was discussed. Cllr Thompson offered her support with this.

**683. Items for the next Agenda**

10 monthly update on current 2024-25 budget

 Report on car park wall

VAT report

 Bank Account progress (may be deferred due to time pressures)

 Financial regulations (may be deferred due to time pressures)

**Dates of next meetings: Thursday 13th February 2025 @ 19.00hrs**

 **Thursday 13th March 2025 @ 19.00hrs**