HEDGE END TOWN COUNCIL - MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4 FEBRUARY 2025

Cllrs. Present: Cllr Paul Carnell, Cllr Ian Corben, Cllr Tonia Craig, Cllr Keith House, Cllr John Jupe, Cllr Jim Mitchell (Chair), Cllr Cliff Morris, Cllr Ron Nichols, Cllr Derek Pretty, Cllr John Shepherd

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Maggie Allingham**,** Cllr Helen Corben, Cllr Cynthia Garton, Cllr Leigh Hadaway**,** Cllr Lucy Jurd, Cllr Jane Welsh

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   None were declared.

3. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2025.**

   RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4. **Matters for Resolution: To consider and agree the Hedge End Town Council Budget for the financial year 2025/2026.**

   Recommendation from Policy & Resources Committee 7 January 2025 regarding the precept figure for 2024/25 – Minute P1387.

   Cllr Pretty outlined how the Council would normally consider the Policy & Resources Committee budget recommendations at this meeting. Draft budgets were studied at three Policy & Resources Committee meetings and the January Full Council meeting. Given the recent Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation white paper, Council opted to review the budget again, reflecting on potential impacts of the paper for the Council.

   Councillors agreed with the Policy & Resources recommendation that all budget lines should be increased by 5% and all fees and charges should be increased by 5%. Cllrs noted the increasing costs of National Insurance contributions.

   Some Councillors were in favour of a precept increase of 13% so that the council can progress with the planned projects. Others felt that this was significant in the current climate.

   Cllrs felt that any increase would need an explanation noting that the percentage increase sounds large, however the actual increase in pounds is circa £15 per year or £1.25 per month.

Cllrs discussed the impact of Local Government Reorganisation and the unknown financial impact this will have on the Council managing more areas and assets.

Cllr Derek Pretty proposed that a precept increase of 13% was accepted. Cllr Ron Nichols seconded this. On vote there was 9 in favour and 1 against.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed an increase of 13% making the precept request to EBC of £1,047,557.39 with the equivalent band d of £131.19.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 19:15pm.