

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE BAY OF COLWYN TOWN COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, RHIW ROAD, COLWYN BAY AT 6.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY 25TH MARCH 2015

PRESENT: Cllr J Reaney (Chairman)
Cllrs: J Davies, D Griffiths, C Hughes, A Khan, Mrs H Meredith,
P Richards, S Taylor, G Ward

OFFICER: Mrs C J Earley

413/14 Welcome & Apologies for Absence:

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Cllr Mrs V Smith, and Cllr V Perry.

414/14 Declarations of Interest: Members are reminded that they must declare the existence and nature of any personal and/or prejudicial interests.

415/14 Minutes:

- a. *Resolved to receive, approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting, held on 18th February 2015.*
- b. *Resolved to receive a copy of the Draft Minutes of the Buildings Sub-Committee, held on 9th March 2015.*

416/14 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings:

- a. **Min. 357/14(a) - CVSC Lease:**

The Clerk submitted a copy of the proposed wording for the option to renew for the CVSC and CC leases and tabled an additional letter from Osborns Solicitors seeking the Town Council's view on a proposal from CCBC that the annual payments to both tenants should be made via the Town Council.

Resolved to accept the proposed wording for the renewal clause in the leases and the proposal that payments from CCBC to the tenants should be made via the Town Council.

- b. **Min. 357/14(b)(ii) – Access all Eirias Tickets:**

Members were asked to consider making the 15 standing tickets to be received for the 7th June concert and room hire (ongoing) available via the Conwy Bean Timebank.

Resolved to confirm the availability of both Access all Eirias tickets and room hire via Bean spend and to note that the General Purpose & Planning Committee has approved the draft content for the Bean website, in preparation for its launch in May.

c. Min. 359/14(b) – Street Lighting:

It was noted that Ian Carrie, CCBC Street Lighting Manager, had attended a meeting of the GP&P Committee on 17th March and that a report on the street lighting replacement programme will be available via those minutes.

d. Min. 362/14(b) – Locality Plan:

The Clerk submitted a copy of the current Locality Plan for ‘Coastal Central’ area, created in 2011 out of the regeneration themes at that time, together with a covering e-mail from Shane Wetton confirming that this had been expanded, after consultation with local county councillors, to include projects in Old Colwyn and Rhos on Sea. It was noted that the County Council is currently looking at updating the Locality plans and considering how best to keep them current and that comments from the Town Council would be welcomed. The Clerk advised members that Shane Wetton would be giving a presentation on Locality Plans at the next CCBC/T&CC Forum meeting (April).

Resolved to ask that the Clerk contacts Shane Wetton to discuss the most appropriate way to update the Plan, possibly via a presentation at a future Town Council meeting.

e. Min. 365/14 – Gas Supply Contract:

It was noted that British Gas were willing to undercut the cheapest of the alternative quotes received and a new fixed tariff contract has been entered into for the Town Hall, which will run until March 2017.

f. Min. 371/14 – BCUHB:

The Clerk tabled a response from the Welsh Government Business Team, on behalf of the First Minister, to concerns about the withdrawal of consultant-led maternity services at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. It was noted that the BCUHB is currently considering alternative proposals put forward by consultants and that ‘temporary changes will be postponed for up to two weeks (to 20 April) while this process takes place.

Resolved to note the response and await further developments.

g. Min. 372/14(b) – Madoc Project:

The Clerk submitted, for information, the report and minutes from the CCBC Cabinet meeting held on 10th March, at which the application for funding of £16,000 towards the work to produce a Bill of Quantities had been declined. The Clerk had also circulated an e-mail to Members informing them that she had been told this was due to issues with the strategic fit and timing of the project, with associated funding challenges, the need to separate highway / safety concerns (which should be addressed by ERF) and the possibility of a future tidal lagoon project in the area, which may provide funding opportunities. However, it had also been stated that there was significant support amongst both Officers and

Members for the Madoc theme, which could still be progressed with smaller, non-infrastructure related projects.

Cllr Griffiths gave a verbal report on the outcome of the meeting, informing members that several possible funding bodies had already been contacted by the group and seemed supportive. A campaign has therefore commenced to seek public support in order to put pressure on CCBC to meet its obligations with regards to access issues (to the beach and for cyclists/pedestrian safety).

Cllr Griffiths agreed to keep the Committee updated on progress.

Resolved to receive the report and minutes and to thank Cllr Griffiths for his report.

h. Min. 389/14 – Use Class for Town Hall:

The Clerk submitted correspondence from the Planning Department confirming the need for the Town Council to submit an application to formalise the use of the former Magistrates' Court building as a Town Hall.

Resolved to request that the Clerk contacts the Planning Officer to query if use becomes accepted after a certain period of time and, if not, what supporting documents would have to be prepared for submission with any application.

417/14 Finance:

- a. ***Resolved to authorise payments made on behalf of the Council for the period 11/2/15 – 13/3/15, as detailed on Schedule 'A' attached.***
- b. ***Resolved to receive and sign a copy of the latest bank reconciliations, as at 28th February 2015.***
- c. The Clerk submitted details of price/dividend information for the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund and it was noted that, with the authorisation of the Mayor and Chair of Policy & Finance, a further £50,000 of the Council's earmarked Capital Reserve was recently transferred into the fund, on the maturity of a fixed term deposit.

418/14 Conwy CBC:

- a. The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a draft Protocol for the delegation or devolution of services between CCBC and Town and Community Councils.

Resolved to support the adoption of the protocol at the next CCBC / T&CC Forum meeting.

- b. Members were asked to consider a request to carry forward a grant allocation of £3,523 for Old Colwyn Environment Federation from the large grants budget for 2014/15 to 2015/16, due to higher tenders than anticipated and the need to resubmit a Wren application for a higher amount to complete the works.

Resolved to approve the carrying forward of the grant to 2015/16 (subject to Wren approval).

419/14 Welsh Government:

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the following WG Consultation documents:

a. White Paper: Reforming Local Government - Power to Local People

- i.* Presentation notes from the recent CCBC Forum meeting
- ii.* Presentation notes and a verbal report from the Clerk, following a meeting between Clerks and WG Civil Servants, held on 19th March 2015.
- iii.* The draft response of the N&MWALC (to be considered and approved at its April meeting)

A discussion took place regarding the importance of this White Paper for the future of Town and Community Councils and concerns about some of the implications of the proposed reforms, in particular: the proposed role of the County Councils as ‘lead authorities’; dual hatted members; additional responsibilities and resulting increases in councillor allowances; the role of Town and Community Councils in the scrutiny process; the impact of limiting the number of terms a member can serve on attracting greater diversity/younger members; the need for trained locum Clerks to ensure competency status is not affected due to absence/loss of the Clerk; the level of training/experience required for a Clerk to meet competency standards.

Resolved that the Clerk drafts a response to the consultation question, taking into account the draft response of the N&MWALC and feedback from Members/ consultation events, and that this is referred to the Council for approval on 20th April 2015.

b. Landfill Disposals Tax (extract re: Chapter 5)

The Clerk highlighted to members the impact the proposed changes to the Landfill Tax could have on local projects that currently benefit from Wren funding (through the current Landfill Tax Community Fund).

Resolved to receive and note the consultation document and leave it to individual members to respond.

c. Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014

Resolved to receive and note the updated Audit Regulations, which come into effect from 31st March 2015.

d. Planning (Wales) Bill - Planning Prospectus Overview

Resolved to receive a copy of the overview, which outlines the alignment of the planning system with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.

420/14 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales:

- a. The Clerk submitted the published report, together with an extract from the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 12th November 2014, when the draft report was initially considered.

Concern was expressed that there has been no reduction in the level of remuneration for County Councillors, given the current austerity measures and the increases in Council Tax of 5% per annum required in recent years to maintain reducing public services. Concern was also expressed that some members see their position as a full-time role, whereas others may have other job commitments alongside it and the time commitment given to the role can vary quite significantly.

Resolved to recommend that the Council writes to the Leader, CCBC, to state concerns about the level of remuneration of County Councillors in recognition of the financial pressures facing local taxpayers.

- b. *Resolved to note the resolution of 12/11/14 regarding the adoption of allowances for Town & Community Councillors for 2015/16.*

421/14 Local Members Ward Allowances:

The Clerk tabled the following final submissions for 2014/15:

- a. Cllr C Hughes – funding for St Paul’s flowerbeds (wildflower garden) - £300
- b. Cllr L Griffiths – funding for Tape for equipment and promotional flyers - £300
- c. Cllr P Richards – it was noted that Cllr Richards had intended to use his 2013/14 allowance for costs relating to the relocation of granite planters on Station Road, but that the contractors at The Central had now agreed to undertake this work at no cost. Under these exceptional circumstances, a request was made that the unspent allowance be carried forward to 2015/16.
- d. Cllr H Meredith – a request was made on behalf of Rhiw Ward members for funding from unspent ward allowances to be allocated towards urgent bridge repair works in Pwllcrochan Woods. Confirmation of the total cost of the works and the members/amounts required is expected in the next few days.

Resolved to approve the project proposals outlined in a), b) and d) above and to carry forward the £300 allowance for Cllr P Richards due to circumstances beyond his control.

422/14 Microshade Managed IT Services:

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, information on a managed IT service provided by Microshade for the local council sector. It was noted that several local larger councils have already moved, or are intending to move, to server-based IT systems and that support is shortly to be withdrawn by our finance software provider for councils operating on a network attached storage device (external hard drive), as we do, as this does not use a windows operating platform and could therefore cause compatibility issues with future software upgrades. The Clerk outlined to members the costs of purchasing, setting up and maintaining an on-site server, which would be

at least £3,000 initially, followed by a minimum of £120pm support costs.

It was noted that it had not been possible to obtain three quotations for a remote application housing solution, as provided by Microshade, as this was a specialist product designed for the local council market.

Resolved to recommend that the Council enters into a three year fixed contract for provision of IT services (including relevant software licenses) from Microshade at an initial cost of £375, followed by monthly fees of £68.50 (based on two users).

423/14 Gwynt y Môr Wind Farm Community Fund:

The Clerk submitted an e-mail from CVSC, confirming the announcement of a £570,000 donation to RNLI in North Wales and the appointment of CVSC to administer the £multi-million Community Fund.

Resolved to receive and note the information.

424/14 Grants:

- a. Members were asked to consider and agree the process for considering event grants for 2015/16.

Resolved to invite applications for Events Grants for 2015/16, using the criteria, application forms and evaluation forms adopted last year.

- b. The Clerk submitted a completed event evaluation form for Ysgol ar y Traeth, for an event in September 2014.

Resolved to receive and note the evaluation report.

- c. The Clerk submitted details of a late large grant application that had been received. Members noted and endorsed the response sent by the Clerk.

d. Small Grants:

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the final batch of small grant applications received for 2014/15.

Resolved to recommend approval of small grant payments, as detailed on Schedule 'B' attached, together with a donation of £4,500 to the Sir John Henry Morris Jones Trust Fund.

The Meeting Closed at 8.10 p.m.

..... Chairman