

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 17TH FEBRUARY 2016

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs S Roy (Town Mayor)
Cllr D Griffiths (Chairman)
Cllrs: J Davies, A Mason, Mrs H Meredith, Mrs V Perry, P Richards,
Mrs V Smith, S Taylor, G Ward

OFFICER: Mrs T Earley, Town Clerk

337/15 Welcome & Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs: A Khan and T Pearson.

338/15 Declarations of Interest:

Members were reminded that they must declare the existence and nature of any personal and/or prejudicial interests. None were declared.

339/15 Minutes:

Resolved to receive, approve and sign as a correct record:

- a. The Minutes of the meeting, held on 6th January 2016.*
- b. The Minutes of a Special meeting held on 25th January 2016.*
- c. The Minutes of a Special Meeting held on 10th February 2016.*

340/15 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:

- a. Min. 279/15(d) – Consultation on the proposals for National Well-being Indicators:** It was noted that a copy of the response from WCVA is available on request from the Clerk.
- b. Min. 280/15(a) – Election Turnout:** The Clerk submitted information from CCBC on turnout at the two recent by-elections (Rhos and Eirias wards) compared to the two previous ones where poll cards were not issued, together with an explanation for the drop in registered electors.

It was noted that the percentage of postal votes of the total votes was much higher when poll cards were not issued (87% and 76% compared to 54% and 47% with poll cards) and that the overall % turnout was also significantly higher when poll cards are issued.

- c. Min. 329/15 – Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill:** It was noted that copies of the response by the Town Council, the Society of Local Clerks and One Voice Wales are available on request from the Clerk.

341/15 Finance:

- a. *Resolved to authorise payments made on behalf of the Council for the period 1/1/16 to 10/2/16, as detailed in Schedule 'A' attached.*
- b. *Resolved to receive and sign a copy of the latest bank reconciliations.*
- c. The Clerk submitted, in accordance with the recently adopted Financial Regulations, a list of regular payments for prior authorisation.

Resolved to authorise the regular payments, as detailed in Schedule 'B' attached.

342/15 Conwy CBC:

- a. The Clerk submitted, for information, the minutes of the Clerks' Network and Forum meetings held on 13th January 2016. A brief verbal report was given by the Clerk to highlight the key points from each meeting. Concern was expressed about the decision by CCBC to cease the summer play scheme provision in 2015, which had previously been partly funded by Town and Community Councils, without any prior notice or discussion. Members agreed that it would be difficult for a voluntary group to take over management of the play schemes, due to the experience needed to recruit and train volunteer play workers and the cost of insurance.

Resolved to ask Members to enquire if similar provision is continuing in other counties in North Wales (through the N&MWALC) and to ask for further discussion about this in Conwy.

Further resolved to request that the proposed reduction in household waste collections and the new car parking strategy, with charges proposed for a previously free car park and the waterfront, are added to the agenda for the next CCBC/T&CC Forum meeting.

- b. It was noted that the Clerk had been unable to attend the Bay Life meeting on 8th February, but that an update had been requested.
- c. **Theatr Colwyn Joint Management Committee:** Cllrs D Griffiths and S Taylor gave a verbal report following a meeting of the Theatr Colwyn Joint Management Committee, held on 8th February. It was noted that the annual Pantomime had been very popular, with 216 more people attending than in the previous year and one less performance. Tickets are now being sold for next year. A discussion took place around how interaction with the cast could be improved after the 'civic night' performance. Attendance throughout the year was also improving, with approximately 35,000 per annum total attendance and some performances (including films) selling out. The vast majority of those attending are still local, but 6.8% of attendees last year came from England. A financial report was not available, but Cllr Griffiths confirmed that continued funding support from both this Council and CCBC was still required and helps to provide a great community facility.

Resolved to thank Cllrs Griffiths and Taylor for their reports and request an up to date financial summary.

- d. **CCTV Annual Report 2014-15:** The Clerk submitted a copy of the annual report and summary presentation slides. It was noted that the control room will be moving to the new office accommodation in 2017/18 and that during the next two years, additional funding will need to be sourced to upgrade the cameras to High Definition.

Resolved to receive and note the report.

- e. **Car Parking Strategy:** The Clerk submitted, for information, a CCBC report outlining proposals for the introduction of charging in several areas (both on-street and car parks) across the County. It was noted that the report recommends the introduction of charges at Colwyn Bay promenade and Berthes Road car park in Old Colwyn. The recommendations will be considered by CCBC Cabinet next week, but there will be full consultation prior to implementation of any changes. Members queried the extent of the promenade to be covered by the charges and whether Berthes Road car park was owned by CCBC. Concern was also expressed about displacement car parking, especially in residential areas close to the promenade. However, it was also recognised that car parking income could help with maintenance costs of the new beach and promenade area.

Resolved to receive and note the report and await further consultation in due course.

343/15 Welsh Government:

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the following correspondence:

- a. A letter of introduction from the new Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

Resolved to receive and note the correspondence.

344/15 One Voice Wales:

- a. The Clerk submitted notice of the Larger Councils Committee meeting, held earlier today. Cllr S Roy had attended the meeting and gave a brief verbal report, highlighting the need expressed at the meeting for town and community councils across Wales to show a greater willingness to consider alternative delivery models for some services, if we do not want service delivery to pass directly to unelected third sector bodies. Concerns about possible double taxation were also discussed. There had also been a discussion about how to make the larger councils committee more accessible to member councils and options discussed included regional sub-committees and video conferences. The Bay of Colwyn Town Council had been praised on its Student Advisor scheme, which encouraged a greater voice in decision making by younger people in the area.

- b. The Clerk submitted a copy of a letter confirming Welsh Government support for One Voice Wales for a further three year period. A review of One Voice Wales had recently been carried out by the WG and this had concluded:
“Given the challenges facing the sector, the nature of the sector and the difficulties which this presents in dealing with it, the expertise which OVW has developed in relation to the sector, the value for money which it represents, and the scope to build and improve on the existing strengths which exist, continued funding for One Voice Wales is recommended”.

Some concerns were expressed by members about the purpose of One Voice Wales and whether or not a representation body was required for our sector, with members suggesting that our elected Assembly Member should be the conduit for representation and stating concerns about an unelected body standing between our individual viewpoint and the Welsh Government Ministers and Officials. General concerns were also expressed about the roles of any unelected officials, such as Commissioners, and it was queried whether these were really necessary.

The Chairman summed up the view of the Committee that town and community councils are expected to grow and gain influence in the coming five or so years (due to Local Government reform) and we will not need a sector body, such as One Voice Wales, by then, and should instead be able to retain power and influence in the hands of elected members.

- c. The Clerk submitted a letter inviting membership of One Voice Wales for 2016/17, at a cost of £3,646 (based on 12,841 chargeable dwellings at 28.4 pence per dwelling. Following concerns about the cost of membership, raised at previous meetings, the Clerk submitted written information and gave a verbal report outlining which of the services currently provided by OVW could be sourced from alternative providers.

Resolved to recommend that:

- i. ***The Council declines to re-join OVW for 2016-17 and instead procures legal advice on an ad-hoc basis from CCBC’s legal department (using other providers where there is any conflict in interest).***
- ii. ***Our representatives on the N&MWALC request that the services of Aventure (HR/Employment Law and Health and Safety) are considered as a possible membership benefit of that organisation (group discounts in fees may be possible with additional buying power).***
- iii. ***The Clerk enquires if CCBC could provide HR/Employment Law and H&S consultancy services and, if so, what the cost of these would be.***

345/15 Local Members Ward Allowances:

The Clerk reminded members that a number of them needed to submit project proposals prior to the next meeting (30th March) if they were not to lose any of their current allowance, as only one year’s unspent allowance can be carried forward.

Resolved to request that the Clerk circulates the up to date spreadsheet, detailing the amount of allowances remaining, and a project proposal form by e-mail to all members.

346/15 Overtime Payments in Lieu of Leave:

The Clerk gave a verbal report requesting authorisation of payment of overtime for the Assistant Clerk, in lieu of untaken leave (37.75 hours) during the current year which cannot be carried forward.

Resolved to authorise payment of overtime, as detailed above, in lieu of untaken annual leave.

347/15 Grants:

- a. The Clerk gave a brief verbal update on Youth grant applications, confirming that six applications, totalling approximately £8,000 had received by the deadline (15th Feb). Due to this being within the available budget, members agreed that it would be a waste of time and resources to determine these using participatory budgeting.

Resolved to recommend that the applications be referred to the Amenities Sub-Committee to determine if any additional information is required and that a recommendation be brought back to the next meeting of this Committee.

- b. It was noted that reports and/or letters of thanks have been received from the following ward allowance and grant recipients:
 - i. Tan Lan Community Association
 - ii. N W Deaf Association
 - iii. Hafan Cymru
 - iv. Upper Colwyn Bay Community Centre
 - v. Benefits Advice Shop
 - vi. Home Start Conwy
 - vii. Carers Outreach
 - viii. Tenovus Cancer Care
- c. The following additional items of correspondence in respect of grants were tabled with permission from the Chairman:
 - i. **World War II Commemorative Benches:**

The Clerk tabled a request from the local branch of the British Legion for £375 to purchase two WWII commemorative benches for Queens Gardens, to match the two WWI benches purchased last year. It was noted that the branch would be contributing the remaining £1,500 and that CCBC Parks had agreed to install the benches. Cllr V Perry offered to donate her ward allowance of £300 towards this, with the remaining £75 to come either from another Rhiw ward member's allowance or from the small grants budget.

Resolved to approve the purchase from Cllr V Perry's ward allowance and another Rhiw ward member (to be confirmed) and otherwise to recommend that the shortfall of £75 comes from the small grants budget for 2015/16.

ii. The Queen's 90th Birthday:

The Clerk tabled an enquiry from County Councillor D Milne, enquiring if the Town Council would be making any funding available for street parties to mark the Queen's birthday. It was noted that the small grants budget could be used to fund small scale local events, providing there was an appropriate voluntary organisation willing to submit the application.

It was suggested that some of the funds remaining in the Youth grants budget could be used to provide grants of up to £250 to each local Primary school, if they wished to organise activities/events for the pupils to mark the Queen's birthday.

Resolved to recommend that:

- 1. Any unspent budget from the Youth Grants is used to provide funding to support any local primary schools looking to organise events or activities to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday.***
- 2. A letter is sent to each local Primary school (including Rydal Penrhos) offering up to £250 for each school, subject to written acceptance and details of planned activities/events.***
- 3. The Colwyn in Bloom Committee considers using the Queen's birthday as a possible subject for the Children and/or Adult art competitions for 2016.***

iii. Dan's Den Project:

The Clerk tabled an e-mail from the Treasurer and former Trustee (Bill McMillan), with regards to refunding part of the last large grant paid by the Town Council to Dan's Den.

Resolved to accept a partial refund of £800 of the last large grant issued (2013/14).

iv. Events Grants 2016/17:

Councillor P Richards asked the Committee to consider changing the timescale for requesting and considering 'Event grant' applications to coincide with consideration of large grant applications (i.e. applications by 31st December for grants for events from April the following year), to give applicants more time from being awarded funding to enable them to secure act/entertainment for events.

Resolved to recommend to Council that this change in timescale be approved for the 2017/18 financial year and that applications for the 2016/17 financial year are invited as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

..... Chairman