

**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 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2014**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Mrs V Smith, JP (Town Mayor)  
Cllr J Reaney, Chairman  
Cllrs: J Davies, D Griffiths, Mrs H Meredith, T Pearson, Mrs V Perry,  
S Taylor, G Ward

**OFFICER:** Mrs C Earley, Town Clerk

**111/14 Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Khan, C Perry and Melissa Leonard, Student Advisor

**112/14 Declarations of Interest:**

Members were reminded that they must declare the existence and nature of any personal and/or prejudicial interests.

Cllr Mrs S Roy declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 4(b) –Local Members Ward Allowances.

**113/14 Minutes:**

*Resolved to receive, approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting, held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014.*

**114/14 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:**

**a. Min. 119/13 – School Visits:**

The Clerk submitted a letter of thanks from Ysgol Iau Hen Golwyn.

*Resolved to receive and note the letter and to remind Councillors that are representatives on school governing bodies to encourage other junior schools to take up the offer to visit the Town Hall.*

**b. Min. 64/14 – Local Members Ward Allowances:**

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a revised proposal from Cllr S Roy.

*Resolved to approve the revised submission from Cllr Roy for £180 for art and creative writing workshops for senior citizens of Rhos on Sea.*

- Cllr Roy retired from the meeting during consideration of this matter.

**c. Min. 60/14 – Asset Based Community Development:**

It was noted that a report had been submitted to the General Purpose & Planning Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> July and that the Clerk had been requested to invite Libby Evans, Communities First, to a future meeting to discuss whether there was any duplication between the ABCD proposal and the work currently being done by Libby's team in the Bay of Colwyn area.

**115/14 Finance:**

- a. The Clerk submitted a list of payments made on behalf of the Council for the period 24/5/14 to 25/7/14.

*Resolved to approve the payments, as detailed on Schedule 'A' attached.*

- b. The Clerk submitted a copy of the latest bank reconciliations.

*Resolved to receive, approve and sign the bank reconciliations as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.*

- c. The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the income/expenditure report for quarter one.

*Resolved to receive and note the quarterly income/expenditure report.*

- d. The Clerk submitted, for information, the annual report on the performance of the Public Sector Deposit Fund (2013/14).

**116/14 Welsh Government:**

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the following documents:

- a. Devolution, Democracy and Delivery White Paper – Reforming Local Government**

It was noted that the White Paper is the Welsh Government's statement of intent about the future of Local Government, in response to the publication of the Williams Report on Public Service Governance and Delivery last year. The majority of the report addresses the proposed mergers of Unitary Authorities and proposes a timetable for the completion of this. However, there are two or three paragraphs relating to the future role of Town and Community Councils and two specific questions about this role that need careful consideration.

It was noted that the Society of Local Council Clerks is taking a keen interest in the consultation and has asked that a copy of any response to the White Paper is also forwarded to them, to enable a response to be formulated based on members' views.

*Resolved to circulate the paper to all members and ask that any views or comments be submitted to the Clerk by Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August.*

*Further resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, Mayor and Chairmen of the Policy & Finance and General Purpose & Planning Committees to consider any comments received and draft a response to the White Paper, with a copy to be sent to the SLCC.*

**b. Building Resilient Communities- Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan:**

It was noted that Cllr Phil Edwards, in his role as Poverty Champion, had requested at the recent T&CC Forum meeting that all Town & Community Councils in Conwy consider this document and how they might support action in Conwy to tackle poverty.

*Resolved to reply to Cllr Edwards to thank him to bringing this document to our attention and to highlight some of the support already being given by the Town Council, which includes giving financial support to organisations such as Sure Start and Citizens Advice Bureau.*

**c. Code of Practice on Workforce Matters 2014:**

The Clerk submitted a covering letter and Circular from Lesley Griffiths, AM, issuing a revised Code of Practice on Workforce Matters, which seeks to avoid a two-tier workforce when staff are transferred to other bodies.

*Resolved to receive and note the Code of Practice and be aware of its implications when considering any future delegation of services.*

- d.** It was noted that the following documents will be referred to the General Purpose & Planning Committee:
- i.** Consultation on improving the availability of allotments and community gardens.
  - ii.** Statement of Public Participation for the Welsh National Marine Plan

**117/14 Ombudsman:**

It was noted that a copy of the Public Services Ombudsman's Annual Report for 2013/14 is available on request from the Clerk.

**118/14 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales:**

The Clerk submitted a copy of the Annual Report which contains recommendations regarding payment of allowances to members of Town and Community Councils.

*Resolved to re-affirm the adoption of determinations 40, 41, 43 and 44 (but not 39 and 42), as detailed in Schedule 'B' attached..*

**119/14 Ideas, People, Places Workshop:**

Cllr J Reaney gave a brief verbal report from the workshop held on 18<sup>th</sup> June. The

focus of the workshop had been on how art could be used to enhance the Bay of Colwyn area. It was noted that this had included lighting and performance areas etc and not just pieces of art. Lots of ideas had been submitted and the outcome of a bid for funding to the Arts Council for Wales is now awaited.

#### **120/14 Buisness Improvement District (BID):**

The Clerk submitted a brief written update on progress with the launch of the 'BID' to from Ingrid Lewis, Town Manager. It was noted that launch meetings will be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August to help gather views for the initial scoping/feasibility study, which needs to be lodged with the Welsh Government by 30<sup>th</sup> September.

*Resolved to receive and note the update report from Ingrid Lewis.*

#### **121/14 Conwy County Borough Council:**

- a. It was noted that Rachael Gill and/or Sara Jones hope to attend the next meeting to give feedback on Access all Eirias and Prom Xtra.
- b. The Clerk gave a brief verbal report on the CCBC / Community & Town Council Forum meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, to include:
  - i. Involving Young People – a presentation was given at the meeting by Deborah Job on the Conwy Youth Council and ways to involve young people in the work of T&C Councils. The Clerk spoke about the Student Advisor project which has been running successfully in Colwyn Bay for the past two years.
  - ii. CCTV Funding - A request was made at the meeting for funding towards CCTV maintenance costs. Emma Dowell, John Donnelly and Peter Brown gave a presentation outlining pressures to reduce budgets and the cost of maintenance of the current CCTV cameras (there are 115 in the County, of which 45 are in the Bay of Colwyn area). A plea was made for Town and Community Councils to consider how much financial support they could offer, with a figure of £281 per camera suggested as a starting point for discussion (based on the actual cost of maintaining the cameras for the past year, but excluding any running costs and control room staff costs, which bring the average costs to £4,483 per camera). In return for contributions, the current levels of coverage could be maintained and town and community councils would be given more information about the performance of individual cameras and a say in where they should be located.

Concern was expressed about the level and impact of budget cuts and it was queried whether payments to County Councillors had also been reduced. The Clerk advised members that the Independent Remuneration Panel recommended the levels of allowances to be paid to Members, but it was noted that Members in some other areas had accepted payments below the IRP recommended rates, on a voluntary basis.

*Resolved to invite Emma Dowell, John Donnelly and/or Peter Brown to a future meeting of this Committee to give detailed information on the performance of the cameras in the Bay of Colwyn area over the past 12 months (to include the number and type of incidents recorded) and discuss the suggested level of funding support.*

*Further Resolved to write to Ken Finch, CCBC, to query whether any payments to Members have been reduced as a result of the current budget pressures and cuts to services, in view of the voluntary cuts that have been taken by Members at some other Authorities.*

iii. Welfare Reform Update:

Eryl Rowlands gave a verbal presentation outlining some of the recent welfare reforms and the impact these had had on households in Conwy and highlighting the change to Universal Credit which will be extended across Britain during 2016/17 and requires all claims to be submitted electronically. He also outlined the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme, introduced by the WG in 2013 but which will not increase year on year, resulting in a shortfall of £480,000 with a 5% increase in Council Tax. A Single Fraud Investigation Service is also being established, drawing together staff from DWP, Local Authority and HMRC.

Mr Rowlands would welcome an invitation to visit Town and Community Councils individually to explain the communication plan and what role we could play in signposting residents to help and support services.

*Recommend that Mr Rowlands is invited to address a future meeting of the Council to give an update on the Welfare Reforms.*

c. Social Media Policy & Guidance:

The Clerk submitted a copy of the CCBC Social Media policy (for staff) and Guide for Councillors, which were distributed at the recent Clerks' Network meeting.

*Resolved to recommend that the Council adopts the Policy (amended to refer to the Town Council) and Guide, as detailed in Schedule 'C' attached.*

**122/14 Staff Training:**

- a. The Clerk gave a brief verbal report on the recent LCAS annual seminar, which gave the usual annual update on claims and covered two current 'hot topics' – social media and volunteers.
- b. The Clerk submitted, for information, a copy of the draft Agenda for the SLCC National Conference, to be held from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October in Bristol.

*Resolved to authorise the Clerk to attend the Conference and report back to a*

*future meeting.*

- c. The Clerk submitted details of an e-learning package available from the Welsh Government for frontline staff on complaints handling.

***Resolved to encourage the Clerk, Deputy and Assistant to complete the training package.***

#### **123/14 Sponsorship:**

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a request for sponsorship of the RGC 1404 rugby team, via a perimeter board in Parc Eirias.

***Resolved to recommend that sponsorship be approved for 2014/15, at a cost of £400, and to request that the Town Council's website, Facebook and Twitter addresses be included on the board.***

#### **124/14 Civic Regalia:**

- a. Past Mayors Pendants: The Clerk reported that she is currently seeking to obtain quotations for the purchase of a further stock of Past Mayor's pendants, as there are none remaining in stock. A quote for the release of the artwork and die is awaited from Fattorini to enable further quotations to be sought.
- b. The Clerk reported that the Mayoral Robes, which are on long term loan from CCBC, are becoming more delicate with age and will need extensive repairs or replacing in the short/medium term. An estimate of the cost of purchasing new robes of a similar design with fake fur trim had been received from Llandudno Town Council.

***Resolved to recommend that a budget be considered in 2015/16 for the purchase of two replacement Mayoral Robes, with the former Robes to be used for display purposes only.***

#### **125/14 Town Hall:**

- a. It was noted that the preferred contractor was not able to undertake the joinery works at the Town Hall within the timeframe expected and that an alternative contractor has therefore been engaged to complete the works during the quieter summer period.

***Resolved to endorse the action taken by the Clerk and note that the works have now been completed.***

- b. It was noted that there is a need for remedial works to the electrical installation in the Town Hall following the electrical installation inspection carried out last year. One quotation has been received and two further quotations will now be sought.
- c. Following a request made at a recent meeting, the Clerk submitted a report on the Council's policy on charging for room hire at the Town Hall.

*Resolved to recommend that a two-tier charging structure is introduced from January 2015, whereby a nominal charge of £10 per session is made for use of rooms by local voluntary groups or charitable organisations, as a contribution towards the maintenance costs of the premises, and that the remaining charges be increased slightly, as follows:*

*Committee or Back Meeting Room - £20 per session*

*Council Chamber - £30 per session.*

- Cllr G Ward, having realised he had a personal and prejudicial interest in this item (as a hirer of rooms with the Radio Club), took no part in the discussion or vote on this matter.

**126/14 Grants:**

- a. The Clerk submitted, for information, a letter from the Colwyn Bay, Abergele & District Twinning Association confirming that it was still receiving some support from CCBC and would not require a grant this year.
- b. The Clerk submitted a letter of thanks from the Colwyn Bay Army Cadets for the Youth Grant approved in February 2014.

**127/14 Additional Business:**

The Chairman permitted consideration of the following two additional items, considered to be urgent in nature:

**a. Sub-Committee Terms of Reference:**

*Resolved to approve the Terms of Reference for 2014/15 or the Staffing Sub-Committee and Audit Sub-Committee, as detailed in Schedule 'C' attached.*

**b. Local Members Ward Allowance:**

A project proposal from Cllr A Khan for approximately £150 of his LMWA to be used towards the purchase of a manual water boiler for the Friends of Theatr Colwyn (for the upstairs meeting room) was tabled by Cllr H Meredith.

*Resolved to recommend that the proposal be approved.*

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

..... Chairman