

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 4TH JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: Cllr J Davies (Town Mayor)
Cllr D Griffiths (Chairman)
Cllrs: A Khan, H Meredith, T Pearson, V Perry, P Richards, S Taylor,
G Ward

OFFICER: Mrs C Earley

295/16 Welcome & Apologies for Absence:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2017 and apologies for absence were received from Cllrs: A Mason and Dr S Roy.

296/16 Declarations of Interest:

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

The Clerk declared an interest in agenda items 4(c), (d), (e) and (f) and offered to retire from the meeting during consideration of these matters.

297/16 Minutes:

- a. *Resolved to approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting, held on 16th November 2016.*
- b. *Resolved to receive the draft minutes of:*
 - i. *The Buildings Sub-Committee, held on 30th November 2016.*
 - ii. *The Staffing Sub-Committee, held on 13th December 2016.*

298/16 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

a. Min 231/16 – Ward Allowances:

The Clerk submitted, for information, the final summary of Ward Allowance projects for 2016/17. It was noted that a press release would be sent out and posted on the Town Council's website to publicise these.

b. Min. 265/16 – Repairs and Maintenance Budget:

Resolved to endorse the recommendation of the Buildings Sub-Committee that any budget remaining at the end of the 2016/17 financial year be carried forward to 2017/18 to assist with on-going Town Hall buildings related projects.

c. Min. 276/16 – Salary Estimates:

Resolved to approve the updated salary budget for 2017/18, in line with staff employment contracts and the nationally agreed NJC pay settlement for 2017/18.

d. Min. 276/16 – Christmas Bonus:

Members were asked to consider the recommendation of the Staffing Sub-Committee that a bonus of £75 be paid to each staff member. It was noted that, if approved, this would need to be paid through payroll as it would be considered a taxable benefit.

- The Clerk retired from the meeting during consideration of this matter.

Following some discussion, the following three options were proposed:

- i.** Do nothing
- ii.** Arrange a personal collection
- iii.** Agree to pay the bonus from the Council's staffing budget, noting that this is public funds.

Resolved to refer this matter to the full Council for consideration at the next meeting.

e. Min. 278/16 – Training Plan:

Resolved to approve the annual training plan and budget, as detailed in Schedule 'A' to the minutes.

f. Min. 279/16 – Annual Leave:

Resolved to authorise up to one week of additional leave (unpaid) for the Clerk in 2017/18, if required.

299/16 Finance:

a. *Resolved to authorise payments made on behalf of the Council for the period 1/11/16 to 19/12/16.*

b. *Resolved to receive, approve and authorise the Clerk and Chairman to check and sign the bank reconciliations as at 30.11.16.*

c. The Clerk submitted, for information, correspondence from CCLA regarding the Public Sector Deposit Fund.

Resolved to receive and note the correspondence.

d. Draft Annual Estimates:

The Clerk submitted, for consideration, the draft annual estimates for 2017/18. It

was noted that inflation-only increases had been applied to some budgets, whilst others had been increased based on known or estimated costs, such as the election costs due in May 2017. The Town Manager budget of £10,000 has been removed, as the Clerk had been advised that this would not be requested from 2016/17, due to changes in the role. The draft estimates also include a contribution towards the upgrading of the CCTV cameras in our area (to be considered as a later agenda item) and an increase in the play equipment budget from £12,500 to £15,000 per annum, to assist towards a rolling programme of the replacement/renewal of equipment.

The Clerk also tabled a summary of the forecast reserves for the years ending 31st March 2017 and 31st March 2018, which show that the general reserves are not excessive but will be maintained above the minimum 25% of annual precept, in line with Council policy, to allow for cash-flow fluctuations and unforeseen expenditure during the year.

Members were presented with two options to consider with regards to the level of precept to be requested for 2017/18:

- i. To retain the current levy of £37.00 p.a. for a Band 'D' property, giving a total annual precept of £413,650 (£413,100 for 2016/17, due to a slight increase in council tax base this year).
- ii. To agree a slight increase in the levy by 50 pence per annum to £37.50 for a Band 'D' property, giving a total annual precept of £419,250. This would result in a higher level of general reserves (by £5,600) to give the Council flexibility to react to any as yet unknown cuts in services by CCBC during 2017/18 and/or lessen the impact of any higher increases which might need to follow in future years.

Members were asked to vote on the options above, with maintaining the current levy being the preferred option (by 5 votes to 4).

Resolved to recommend the Draft Estimates to Council for approval and recommend an annual precept of £413,650 (£37.00 per Band D property).

300/16 Conwy CBC:

- a. The Clerk submitted the formal notice of the council tax base for 2017/18 and estimated election costs, for budgetary purposes.
- b. The Clerk submitted notice of the draft rateable value for the Town Hall following the recent revaluation of all business premises. It was noted that each individual occupier of the premises is now responsible for payment of their own rates.
- c. The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a request for funding of up to £30,000 to upgrade the 30 CCTV cameras located in the Bay of Colwyn area (£1,000 per camera). It was noted that the cameras would all need to be upgraded to digital technology prior to the move of the Control Room to the new office building,

anticipated to be in 2018. This would be a 'spend to save' project, as on-going running costs (fibre rental etc) would significantly decrease following the upgrade. The amount requested is only a proportion of the actual costs to upgrade each camera and other funding will need to be found (including from CCBC).

Resolved to recommend that the Council agrees to contribute towards upgrading the 30 cameras in the Bay of Colwyn area and that a budget of £15,000 per annum be allocated for this over the next 2 years.

301/16 Welsh Government / National Assembly:

- a. The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a consultation on proposals to change the name of the National Assembly. Members had differing views on the necessity for change and concern was expressed about the cost involved, especially during times of austerity. A discussion then took place regarding the options in the consultation document.

Resolved to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council, confirming the preferred options as being Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament and Aelod o Senedd Cymru (ASC) / Member of the Welsh Parliament (MWP).

Further resolved to comment that the Welsh name should appear first, followed by the English.

- b. The Clerk submitted, for information, a copy of the Welsh Government's Treasury newsletter.
- c. The Clerk submitted, for consideration, a consultation on the Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme. It was noted that this scheme would be replacing the current WREN grant scheme, operated by Entrust.

Resolved to receive and note the correspondence.

302/16 Office Equipment:

- a. ***Resolved to note and ratify the renewal of the lease for the office franking machine for a further five year period at the same cost as currently paid but with the benefit of lower postage/annual upgrade costs.***
- b. It was noted that the Clerk has replaced her office printer/copier/ scanner, at a cost of £69.99, due to the escalating cost of replacement ink cartridges and paper jams in the old machine.

303/16 Grants:

- a. Members were asked to consider how best to distribute the youth grant budget for 2016/17. It was noted that participatory budgeting (PB) had been trialled over the past two years but that this had not resulted in any significant increase in the

number of applications.

Resolved to issue a press release to invite applications for funding for youth projects, for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting, and only to consider the use of PB if the amount of applications significantly exceeds the budget available.

b. Letters of thanks:

It was noted that letters of thanks have been received from:

- i. Home Start Conwy (large grant - 2nd instalment)

c. Small Grants:

The Clerk tabled two small grant applications for consideration.

Resolved to recommend approval of the grants, as detailed on Schedule 'B' attached.

d. Large Grants:

The Clerk advised members that a special meeting of the Committee would need to be called to consider the large grant applications received for the 2017/18 financial year.

Resolved to call a special meeting of the Committee at 5.15pm on Monday 23rd January, immediately prior to the Council meeting where the draft estimates for 2017/18 will be considered/approved.

The meeting closed at 7:40pm

..... Chairman