

MINUTES OF A HYBRID MEETING OF THE BAY OF COLWYN TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 6.30^{PM} ON MONDAY 6TH MARCH 2023

- PRESENT:** The Mayor, Cllr C Matthews (Chairman)
Cllrs: C Brockley, D Carr, J Clayton, N Coverley, J Higgins, C Hughes, P Hughes, J Hurst, H Fleet (Deputy Mayor), T Maclean, J Nuttall, R Owen, R Parry, S Ryder and D Wilkins
- OFFICERS:** C Earley, Town Clerk and RFO
R Dudley, Assistant Clerk
- VISITORS:** Lyn Cadwallader, OVW
County Cllr Simon Croft

378/22 Welcome and Apologies for Absence:

The Chairman welcomed members and visitors to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs: D Howcroft, D Jones, L Kennedy, Brian Madden, S McAllister, S Price and G Wynne.

379/22 Announcements:

- (a) The Clerk gave a reminder about hybrid meeting protocol/meeting etiquette needed:
(i) put hand up (in person or virtually) to speak
(ii) only one person to speak at a time - please wait to be invited to contribute by the Chair
- (b) The Clerk gave a brief demonstration of the use of bookmarks for the .pdf agenda packs.
- (c) Mayor's Charity Event – The Mayor reminded the members that the supper/charity quiz night will be held on Monday 20th March and that tickets were still available.
- (d) St David's Day Parade – The Clerk firstly thanked all those who had volunteered on the day. There had been a good turnout of people on the streets to watch the parade and 400 school children had taken part. There was also good attendance in the Church afterwards where the school children all sang welsh hymns and were told about the meaning of St David's Day. It was a positive event and excellent feedback had been received.

380/22 Declarations of Interest:

Members were reminded that they must declare the existence and nature of any personal and/or prejudicial interests. Cllr Chris Hughes declared a personal (non-prejudicial) interest in item 6(i) Incredible Edible Project and item 9(b)(ii) Creu Conwy Town Team.

381/22 Visitors to the Council:

- (a) The Chair welcomed Lyn Cadwallader, Chief Executive of One Voice Wales (OVW), to give an overview of the role of OVW and benefits of membership.
Lyn informed the members that he had been Chief Executive of OVW for 13 years and started by giving an overview of the Organisation. Membership is almost 90% of all Town & Community Councils (653) and membership continues to grow. OVW meets with Ministers that have any portfolio that will impact on the Local Council sector. There has been an increase in the recognition of the role of our Councils on a national, regional and local level.

OVW has 6 core aims:

- (i) To be the Single Representative Voice of the sector in Wales
- (ii) Promoting Understanding/awareness of Sector (e.g. with National Bodies)
- (iii) Advice & Support on Policy
- (iv) Providing Advice to Member Councils & Sharing Information – over 440 correspondence items last year shared with member Councils
- (v) Training & Development – massive growth over past 10years. From May to December 2022 over 3000 units of training have been delivered.
- (vi) Promotion of sustainable delivery of services e.g. Local Places for Nature Officer has secured up to £1million in funding drawn down to the sector.

Lyn said the organisation is in frequent contact with Ministers and Senior WG Officers on a wide range of issues. Influencing policy is a key area, e.g. evolving communities' policy (round table exercise to help WG draft legislation). OVW responds to other bodies/consultations on behalf of the sector e.g. Local Gov Reform and the Independent Review Panel. Lyn is the senior lead on Advisory Boards such as Planning Advisory Group, Wellbeing of Future Generations Advisory Group and Climate Change Strategy Panel (Carbon Zero aim by 2030). OVW also feeds back to the Auditor General, Audit Wales and IRPW (Independent Review Panel Wales): the issue regarding taxation/HMRC was finally resolved through the involvement of OVW.

Lyn listed the key benefits of being a Member Council:

- (i) Members can appoint representatives to attend quarterly Area Committee meetings. Two members from each area are then appointed to the National Executive Committee (NEC). Qualifying Member Councils can also attend the Larger Council Committee, which also meets quarterly. Issues brought forward by the Area Committees are considered at NEC.
- (ii) Free legal advice from OVW Officers (and NALC if required) e.g. powers, taxation etc
- (iii) Consultancy Services: VAT advice, Place Plans, HR, H&S – this service is very cost competitive – about 50% less than commercial price.
- (iv) OVW holds a National Conference, an Innovative Practice Conference and a joint training seminar with the Society of Local Council Clerks – sharing best practice.

Lyn then invited any questions: In answer to a question about the benefits to the Clerk rather than just the Council, the Clerk informed members that in the last year she had received advice on several occasions, attended the Larger Council Meetings and the Innovative Practice Conference and shared information and best practice.

In response to a question about whether they publish an Annual report, Lyn confirmed that the Annual Report was almost ready (awaiting translation) and would then be published/shared with the Council.

The Chair thanked Lyn for his attendance and he retired from the meeting.

(b) County Councillor Reports:

Cllr Simon Croft reported on the 9.9% Council Tax increase, which the County Council has

had to impose. It's regrettable, but necessary to try and cover all the costs. It is still not enough.

Cllr Hannah Fleet reported that homelessness had gone up 400% and Grants are available to bring empty properties back into use.

Cllr Chris Hughes and Cllr Chris Brockley reported that Cartrefi have a scheme where they will take on empty houses and manage them, as letting agents, for a small fee.

- (c) The Clerk submitted a request from Darren Millar, MS, to attend a future meeting which was noted by members.
- (d) Public Participation: Carole Griffith (member of public) was invited to speak and expressed her concern about the imminent closure of Nat West Bank in Colwyn Bay. Carole was invited to stay and listen to the debate about the bank closure later on the agenda.

382/22 Minutes

- (a) ***Resolved to receive, approve and sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Council, held on 16th January 2023.***
- (b) ***Resolved to receive and note the minutes of the following meetings:***
 - (i) ***The General Purpose & Planning Committee, held on 31st January & 21st February 2023(draft).***
 - (ii) ***The Policy & Finance Committee, held on 8th February 2023 (draft).***
 - (iii) ***The Colwyn in Bloom Committee, held on 18th January 2023 (draft)***
 - (iv) ***The Audit Sub-Committee held on 6th February 2023 (draft)***
 - (v) ***Notes from a Police Liaison Meeting held on 9th February 2023***
 - (vi) ***The draft minutes of The Volunteer Awards Committee, held on 28th February 2023***
which were shared on-screen and would be forwarded to members by email.
The Clerk reported that 11 nominations had been received and that the Volunteers Presentation evening would be held in the Chamber on Monday 17th April along with the Large Grant awards.

383/22 Matters Arising from Those Minutes:

- (a) **Min.315/22(a) - Town Hall Tower:**
 - (i) Members noted that an expression of interest was submitted to Cadw in December for capital grant funding of up to 50% towards the tower repairs and a response is still awaited. This had been due w/c 6th Feb but was delayed and is now expected later this week (due to the number of applications received). The Clerk will report back to Council with any update/further response, in due course.
 - (ii) Members noted that the scaffolding contract had been cancelled by the builder in January (following a dispute over the weekly scaffolding inspection/hire charges that started being charged in October) and noted that a final invoice (for Dec/Jan) and confirmation of the removal date is awaited.
- (b) **Min. 315/22(c) & Min. 366/22– Old Colwyn War Memorial:**
 - (i) Members noted that a formal response is still awaited from the Church in Wales about if/how the responsibility for the war memorial can be transferred to the Town Council. Verbal confirmation had been received that a freehold transfer is preferred, but clarification was needed regarding legal costs.
 - (ii) Members noted that contact has now been made with the new owner of the former Church, who is willing to discuss works required to the boundary wall and hedge.

The Clerk will report back to Council on any progress made.

(c) **Min. 315/22(f) & Min. 355/22(b) – Electrical Rectification Works:**

- (i) To consider any quotations received for the Category 2 rectification works for the Town Hall and Rear Annexe. It was noted that a further three companies from the CCBC approved contractor list have confirmed they will provide quotes, but these are yet to be received.

Resolved to delegate authority to the Clerk, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of Policy & Finance to consider any quotes received by the extended date of 10th March and instruct the works.

- (ii) ***Resolved to ratify urgent work approved by the Clerk to change seven light fittings in the Town Hall to LED fittings, following the recent failure of two of them, at an estimated cost of £400 (invoice awaited).***

(d) **Min. 317/22 & 365/22(c) – Play Equipment:** The Clerk informed members that quotations for the new inclusive roundabout for Min-y-Don playground had been received, but we are still waiting for the final quotation for Bryn Cadno playground. Members were asked to consider the recommendation to order the larger (2.4m) roundabouts for both locations, using the remainder of the Earmarked reserve, if required.

Resolved to approve using the remainder of the earmarked reserve (up to £58,550) to purchase the larger-sized inclusive roundabouts for both areas.

(e) **Min. 344/22 – Bank Closures:** It was noted that both Nat West and HSBC have given notice that they will be closing their branches in Colwyn Bay in the coming months. The Clerk submitted, for consideration:

- (i) Correspondence about the closure of Nat West from David Jones, MP

(ii) A concern from a local resident about the closure of Nat West, forwarded by Cllr S Ryder. It was noted that David Jones had requested a meeting with senior bank officials to discuss the proposals and had forwarded the report from that meeting to the Council.

Arrangements had been made with the Post Office for everyday banking facilities. Concern was raised about the needs of elderly/vulnerable customers and also the lack of a confidential service for financial matters. A mobile service will be available in Ivy Street Car Park but this will only be for 30 minutes once a week. It was suggested that a community banking hub could be created. Barclays Bank do hold a session, once a month, in Colwyn Bay Library. Carole Griffiths (member of public) said that people would be happier attending a building rather than a mobile bus for privacy and safety reasons.

Resolved to respond to David Jones MP to ask him to encourage both banks to form a Community Banking Hub and join Barclays Bank with monthly sessions at the Library.

(f) **Min. 362/22 – Hybrid Meeting Equipment:**

Resolved to authorise the payment of an invoice for £914 for the new meeting camera/audio equipment, following the return of the equipment loaned by the college.

(g) **Min. 360/22(a) – Events Grants:**

- (i) ***Resolved to approve an event grant to Theatr Colwyn of £5,000 for a series of very low-cost cinema screenings for local residents.***

(ii) Members noted the winner(s) of the St David's Day business window competition and ***Resolved to authorise payment of the prize money of £50, £25 and £25.***

(h) **Min. 350/22(b) – Large Grants:**

Resolved to approve a small grant of £500 to Porth Eirias Running Club.

- (i) **Min 324/22(b) – Colwyn in Bloom Incredible Edible project:** Members were asked to consider approving a service level agreement, to include committing funding of up to £500 per annum towards the town centre Incredible Edible project. The Clerk informed members that the Town Council had a similar agreement with Rhos Rotary Club (who maintained the Lady Diana Memorial Garden in Rhos on Sea). The Clerk asked for approval to increase the budget for 2023/24 to £1,000 to accommodate both agreements.
Resolved to approve the increase in the Parks and Gardens budget to £1,000 from 2023'24 onwards, to cover amounts payable under both SLAs
- (j) **Min. 348/22 – Internal Controls and Internal Audit:**
(i) ***Resolved to approve the Internal Controls, without amendment.***
(ii) ***Resolved to approve the review of internal audit and ratify the appointment of JDH Business Services as Internal Auditor to the Council for 2022/23 (see Schedule B and C to those minutes)***
- (k) **Min. 350/22 – Annual Investment Strategy:**
Resolved to approve the annual investment strategy for 2023/24, as detailed in Schedule D to the minutes.
- (l) **Min. 351/22 – Risk Management:**
Resolved to approve the updated risk management report for 2022/23 (Schedule E)
The Clerk gave a brief verbal update on actions there-in, to include:
(i) Re-application of Smart water to assets: It has been agreed with NW Police to reapply the Smart-water once the Memorial has been cleaned.
(ii) Cyber Security awareness training for local councillors: The link for Cyber Ninja training materials will be available soon from the Welsh Government and all Councillors are encouraged to do the training.
(iii) The Clerk submitted an alternative quotation for reviewing the asbestos risk assessment, re-inspecting the site and producing an asbestos management plan.
Resolved to accept the quotation for reviewing the risk assessment and providing an asbestos management plan for the Rhiw Road site.
- (m) Resolved to note the resolutions of the Committees, as detailed in the Minutes.**

384/22 UK & Welsh Government:

- (a) The Clerk submitted the current consultation on TAN 15 – development, flooding and coastal erosion, and asked for any comments to be submitted by Tuesday 21st March. Any consultation response(s) will then go for approval to the Policy & Finance Committee, prior to submission.
- (b) The Clerk submitted notes from a recent information session about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and members noted the intention to create a pot for smaller projects (<£250k).
- (c) **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales:** The Clerk submitted a copy of the Annual Report for 2023'24 and members were asked to consider and approve any discretionary allowances for the next financial year. It was noted that the basic payment had been changed to a working from home allowance, which would no longer have to go through payroll. It was queried whether Members could still choose to fore-go payment and transfer the money to their Ward Allowances to be distributed in their Ward.
Resolved to approve payment of the following allowances for the 2023/24 financial year:
(i) ***Extra Costs payment: the £156 allowance and the £52 (to cover out of pocket***

expenses) for all Councillors.

- (ii) *Senior Role: £500 allowance for the Chairs of both Main Committees.*
- (iii) *Mayor and Deputy: £750 allowance for the Mayor and £500 for the Deputy Mayor*
- (iv) *Travel and Subsistence for approved duties – at the published (HMRC) rates*
- (v) *Cost of Care or Personal Assistance – actual costs incurred*

385/22 Conwy CBC:

- (a) A brief verbal report from a recent meeting of the Theatr Colwyn Management Committee was given by Cllr David Carr and the Clerk. The main agenda item had been a report on the pantomime. A more detailed financial and activity report had been requested for the next meeting and at each meeting thereafter.
- (b) ***Resolved to approve payment of the invoice for £65,000 for the contribution to the Theatre and Oriel Colwyn for 2022/23.***
- (c) The Clerk submitted an update regarding Playing Out sessions for 2023, which was noted by members.
- (d) Summer Concerts:
 - (i) It was noted that the Town Council has been allocated 10 tickets for networking/hospitality prior to the Ministry of Sound and Rag and Bone Man concerts, on Friday 21st and Sunday 23rd July, and members were asked to consider how these will be allocated.
Resolved that the Mayor /Deputy Mayor would host a table at each and the rest would be allocated amongst Councillors/staff (by ballot if over-subscribed)
 - (ii) It was noted that there is also an offer of 10 general admission tickets for the N-Dubz concert on Saturday 22nd July. Members were asked to bring ideas to the next meeting on how these might best be allocated.

386/22 Representatives on Outside Bodies:

Reports from the Clerk and/or Members who are representatives of the Council on outside bodies were invited. Reports presented included:

- (a) Bay of Colwyn Place Plan Steering Group: Members noted the Terms of Reference in respect of membership of the Steering Group and a report on recent attendance at recent meetings was circulated. It was noted that three members had been unable to attend the meetings due to work commitments and the Clerk asked members to consider if alternative Ward representatives need to be appointed, given that the Place Plan was now at a critical stage.
Resolved to appoint Cllr Sarah Ryder for Eirias Ward, Cllr Jason Higgins for Colwyn Ward and Cllr David Howcroft for Dinarth Ward, to replace Cllrs N Coverley, S McAllister and D Wilkins. As Cllr Howcroft was not at the meeting, Cllr Chris Brockley (Rhos Ward Member) agreed to be appointed, if Cllr Howcroft could not attend due to work commitments.
- (b) Creu Conwy Town Team
 - (i) The Clerk and Cllr Chris Hughes gave a brief verbal report on the recent Town Team meeting. There was a need for a communication strategy to be developed to ensure information about what is going on is being widely distributed. Members noted the discussions about an event/project to mark the centenary of Eirias Park (in September 2023). The Artisan Market is looking to bring more cultural activity into the town centre. The new Business Forum is considering organising a Sept/Oct 'Made in Wales' themed event possibly linked to the market. There may be an opportunity to tie these events all

together for a celebratory weekend event. Members also noted that a bid has been put in by CCBC to the UKSP Fund to support the work of the five Town Teams.

- (c) Ysgol Bod Alaw: Members noted that a meeting is being convened to explore the feasibility of CCTV coverage of the school premises, following recent issues with anti-social behaviour, and that a funding application may be submitted to the Town Council.
- (d) Bay of Colwyn Wellbeing Network: The Clerk gave a brief verbal report on the recent meeting. The Clerk had attended a NALC webinar to share advice/guidance on ways local councils can support their communities to take steps to reduce loneliness and isolation and had shared the notes from this at the Wellbeing Network meeting. CVSC had also shared information about heating vouchers (available by referral by specific agencies only). The Clerk asked members if they would support the Town Hall staff working on developing a database of local groups/activities that people could access to find out what is going on. This could be useful for those involved in social prescribing, or more informally by friends and family of those who are socially isolated or lonely.
Resolved to support this initiative, which could be made available via the Town Council website.
- (e) Conwy CAB: Members noted a report from Cllr Maclean regarding recent Cost of Living briefing event that he had attended.

387/22 One Voice Wales/Society of Local Council Clerks:

- (a) The Clerk submitted notes from a 'Tackling Loneliness and Isolation from a Local Council Perspective' webinar, delivered by NALC (England's equivalent to OVW), which were noted by members.
- (b) The Clerk submitted a report on the recent OVW Larger Councils Committee meeting attended by the Clerk and Cllr Stephen Price.
- (c) ***Resolved to defer consideration of the renewal of membership of OVW for 2023'24 until the next meeting, to allow time for the information received from Lyn Cadwallader to be circulated.***
- (d) The Clerk submitted a OVW training needs survey and asked members to consider appointing a small working group to work through it.
Resolved to appoint a small working group comprising Cllrs C Hughes and J Hurst to complete it with the Clerk.

388/22 Finance:

Resolved to authorise payment of the following invoice(s):

- (a) ***SETs Ltd - £11,646 for the storage, testing, installation and removal of the festive lighting.***

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

..... Chairman