

At a **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 15th October 2014 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Wellington Road, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor D. Simmons (Mayor)

Councillors I. W. Armstrong, C. S. Ball, B. Blakeley, Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, Mrs E. M. Chard, Ms J. Hughes, A. R. James, J. May, Mrs M. McCarroll, B. Mellor, B. F. Moylan, Mrs W. M. Mullen-James, P. Prendergast, S. H. Ratcliffe, Miss S. L. Roberts, A. J. Rutherford and Miss C. L. Williams.

Mr G. J. Nickels – Town Clerk
Miss H. J. Windus – Personal Assistant & Secretary

68. OPENING OF MEETING

The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev. Stan Walker, commenced proceedings by leading all present in prayer.

69. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs P. M. Jones (on holiday), Miss R. Siddall (family commitment) and W. N. Tasker (other commitment).

70. MINUTES

The Minutes of the following Meetings of Council and Committees were submitted for approval as a correct record:

Meeting of Council - 17th September 2014 - Min.Nos. 54-67

Proposed by Councillor D. Simmons and seconded by Councillor Miss C. L. Williams and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

Planning - 17th September 2014 - Min.Nos. 17-20
Committee

Proposed by Councillor A. R. James and seconded by Councillor Mrs E. M. Chard and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

Planning - 1st October 2014 - Min.Nos. 21-23
Committee

Proposed by Councillor A. R. James and seconded by Councillor Mrs E. M. Chard and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

To Confirm or otherwise:

Finance & General - 1st October 2014 - Min.Nos. 48-61
Purposes Committee

Proposed by Councillor P. Prendergast and seconded by Councillor Miss S. L. Roberts and **RESOLVED** as a correct record and confirmed for action.

71. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor referred to the list of engagements he and the Deputy Mayor had attended over the last month for Members' information.

72. PRESENTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – HOUSING ENFORCEMENT / EMPTY HOMES OFFICER

Further to Minute No.42 of the meeting of Council held on 16th July 2014, the Mayor welcomed Empty Homes Officer, Ms Andrea Fisher and Housing Officer, Mr Sean Marsh Lloyd and Public Protection Officer, Ms Miriam Evans and invited them to address the Council.

Ms Evans explained that once a complaint about a property was received it was inspected under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and showed a few picture examples of typical types of disrepair and unhealthy conditions.

Ms Evans said that most of the complaints received about Rhyl properties were dealt with under the Licensing Scheme 2010.

Ms Fisher went through the Empty Homes process of engagement and enforcement and the financial incentives on offer to property owners to bring their properties back into use.

In response to Members' comments and questions, the officers advised that:

- if an owner is keeping the front of his/her property well then there was nothing the Local Authority could do about the interior or the rear.
- anti-social behaviour was a Police issue, not a matter for the Local Authority.
- if Members had any problem properties in their wards then they should pass the details to them and they would look into them.
- tenants could distance themselves from problems as housing inspections were carried out due to a legal requirement to do so, not always in response to complaints directly from tenants and that this is always made clear to the property owner in an attempt to protect the relationship between the owner and the tenant.
- 300 properties had been identified in Rhyl and tackled via licensing applications.
- they had restricted influence with social landlords.

- further pressure was being brought to bear by the Welsh Government on Social Services departments via the Housing Act and that there was much more communication between all agencies now to try to sort any problems out before tenants go into properties.
- they were proactively targeting flats above food outlets in the town centre, which were not always obvious from outside.
- Visits to properties were done within 10 days of a complaint being received and that Notices were served within a few days of a visit, but that said they did have to give landlords reasonable time to carry out works.

During the presentation Ms Fisher agreed to provide all Members with a copy of the presentation she had given.

The Mayor thanked the officers for attending.

73. RHYL GOING FORWARD PROGRESS REPORT

The Mayor welcomed Mr Tom Booty and invited him to update Members on the progress of the Rhyl Coastal Facilities proposal.

Mr Booty circulated copies of the Expressions of Interest and the Stage 2 – Evaluation Methodology and Criteria documents for Members’ information and confirmed that two companies were now through to Stage 2 and that both companies had visited the site.

Mr Booty added that the company’s concept proposals would be submitted in December 2014 and that at the beginning of February 2015, DCC would have selected its preferred proposal and offered an exclusivity agreement to the preferred company.

In response to Members’ comments and questions Mr Booty advised that:

- both companies were aware of the Ocean Plaza site.
- DCC were not in the business of telling developers what we wanted but that a good proposal scoring matrix had been developed (circulated) whereby high scores would be given to a proposal that met DCC’s criteria and a low score applied if it did not.
- as DCC owned the land (unlike Ocean Plaza) it had much more control over the development and would be able to terminate an agreement if certain targets were not met.
- Of course there were no guarantees but he was fairly confident that a good quality development would be delivered.

The Mayor thanked Mr Booty for his attendance.

74. PRESENTATION: SUSTAINABLE DENBIGHSHIRE

Further to Minute No.186 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7th May 2014, the Mayor welcomed Mr Les Starling and invited him to address Members.

Mr Starling thanked the Council for allowing him to attend and for its continued presence on Sustainable Denbighshire, which began with the late and much missed Councillor Glyn Pickering and now Councillor B. F. Moylan.

Mr Starling reminded Members that the group started out as Local Agenda 21 and that when it became Sustainable Denbighshire it benefitted from a full-time officer, which was reduced to part-time and eventually lost so the group now relied heavily on volunteers.

Mr Starling advised that the group promoted recycling at all levels, from supporting Local Authority schemes like the Empty Homes project (which he had found very interesting) bringing empty properties back into used as an alternative to new builds which were not good for the environment right down to home composting. Mr Starling said that the strap line "Think Global, Act Local" was very much their philosophy.

The group meets regularly with typically six to eight people in attendance and that they had a good relationship with Denbighshire County Council.

The Mayor thanked Mr Starling for his attendance.

75. QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

76. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

***RESOLVED** that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, on the grounds of confidentiality.*

77. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – PROGRESS REPORT

The Mayor advised that the Risk Assessment Sub-Committee had nothing new to report at this time, but reminded Members of the Special Meeting of Council to be held on Wednesday 22nd October.

78. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further items of business the Mayor declared the meeting of Council closed.

Mayor:

Date: