

At a **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 18th June 2014 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Wellington Road, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor D. Simmons (Mayor)

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

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

19. OPENING OF MEETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Mayor referred to the recent hospitalisation of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor B. Mellor and to his recovering at home and to a very popular Denbighshire County Council Planning Officer, Mrs Gwen Butler, leaving the authority after 36 years.

RESOLVED that a get well card be sent to Councillor Mellor and a leaving card be sent to Mrs Butler.

20. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Councillors B. Mellor (indisposed), Miss S. L. Roberts (work commitment) and Miss R. Siddall (family commitment).

21. MINUTES

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

Annual Meeting - 21st May 2014 - Min.Nos. 1-18
of Council

Proposed by Councillor D. Simmons and seconded by Councillor Mrs E. M. Chard and ***RESOLVED*** as a correct record.

Planning - 4th June 2014 - Min.Nos. 1-3
Committee

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

To Confirm or otherwise:

Finance & General - 4th June 2014 - Min.Nos. 1-16
Purposes Committee

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

22. 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.

23. PRESENTATION: BRITISH DESTINATIONS

Further to Minute No.101 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th December 2014 (minute circulated with agenda), the Mayor welcomed British Destinations' Chief Executive, Mr Peter Hampson, to the meeting and invited him to address Councillors.

Mr Hampson thanked the Council for inviting him to give a presentation and advised that British Destinations:

- Was a trade association with over 100 area members (DCC was a member but unfortunately due to economic restraints they left two years ago).
- Was established 90 years ago but has changed its name a few times since then.
- Had most of its dealings with Westminster and some with the Welsh Government and in the EU.
- Are passionate about destination management.
- Focus on HMOs, the social implications and funding to improve them.
- Have an active website.
- Source and analyse intelligence using a sophisticated model based on Central Government statistics not general tourism figures and trends and share this information with their members.
- Are particularly interested in sustainable tourism and improving destination High Streets to continue to attract visitors.
- Work with all types of destinations – coastal / seaside, rural, urban and historic.
- Offering low cost marketing opportunities for their members via their website and an annual two page promotion with the Mirror Group Newspapers.
- Do a lot of work to counter negative destination based press reports.
- Offer low cost stays at the Union Jack Club in London for any member representatives having business there (£40 per night).
- Would love to be lobbying for Rhyl.

In response to Members' comments, Mr Hampson stated that:

- If Rhyl was to become a member British Destinations would be dedicated to Rhyl, not neighbouring towns and not Denbighshire.
- They would share all funding related information and Best Practice models gained from their 100+ area members.
- They would gather whatever information they could (given that British Destinations was just a handful of individuals) surrounding a specific matter or facility to furnish the Town Council with as much factual information as possible.
- Rhyl and Prestatyn had much in common with many of their English counterparts and that they would gladly share all information.

- They work closely with Visit Wales (a Welsh Government backed body) and would approach Welsh Government on any matter a member area wanted us to. Adding that they played a significant part in bringing about the Coastal Communities Fund by lobbying Westminster.

The Mayor thanked Mr Hampson for an interesting presentation.

24. PRESENTATION: SUPPORTERS OF THE RHYL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Further to Minute No.10(ii) of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th June 2014, the Mayor welcomed Ms Noreen Stevenson (Chair) and Mrs Sharon Wilde-Jones (Secretary) and invited them to address Members.

Ms Stevenson explained that:

- the group began in 2003 with the objective being to renovate and develop the gardens for future generations.
- The community café is open seven days a week and they had operated a Parent and Toddler group since 2004.
- All profit made is ploughed back into the park.
- The group took on an unused building in the park which was now a community centre including a meeting room and activity room and was the home of the Sunny Rhyl Bowling Club.
- The group had raised over £150,000 through community fundraising including open air events and quiz nights which attracted people to Rhyl.
- The group had been awarded the Queens Award for their voluntary work.
- The Gardens were a flagship for Rhyl and Denbighshire to be proud of. A thriving, beautiful environment.

However, Ms Stevenson went on to say that:

- There was no public signage for the park and no tourism literature makes any mention of it as it does not have a recognisable postcode.
- The group's concern has always been about maintaining the park, not for our own personal safety. Volunteers are quite capable of keeping themselves safe.
- Denbighshire County Council (DCC) removed the full-time warden's post the park benefitted from and replaced it with a part-time post.
- The group warned DCC that should the park eventually lose the part-time post, the anti-social behaviour would increase and have a detrimental effect on the park. DCC had given assurances that the park would always be maintained, but the post now has responsibilities on the Promenade as well. DCC have said that the park could use the gardening services of the post on an "unscheduled" basis which they began a trial period of just before Easter (one of the parks busiest times of the year). The postholder is struggling to keep on top of the significant amount of work the park requires. It is too much work for one person when he is taken away from the park to remove litter on the Prom.
- As a result of reduced gardening provision, the park is sliding quite noticeably and quite quickly which is damaging the volunteers' motivation.
- The group had organised a petition with over 2,000 signatures, which it was going to present to the next meeting of the County Council but this had been subsequently cancelled.
- The new green space planned in the west of Rhyl looks great, but will it fall foul of the same lack of maintenance the gardens are now suffering from? Why doesn't DCC look after the green spaces it already has?

Members offered their complete support to the group and gave Ms Stevenson and Mrs Wilde-Jones their assurances that they would do all they could in their various DCC roles to get the park the maintenance provision it deserves.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) *the Town Clerk to write a strongly worded letter to DCC highlighting the problems reported by the Supporters of the Rhyl Botanical Gardens and the potential for the same to be ultimately experienced at the West Rhyl green space development, and making reference to the duty of care DCC has towards older and younger people.*
- (ii) *the issues to be referred to the next DCC led Members Area Group meeting.*
- (iii) *Councillor Blakeley, as Chair of DCC, to speak to the Chief Executive and arrange for the petition to be presented to the next Communities Scrutiny Committee.*

[Councillors Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE and Mrs P. M. Jones joined the meeting at this point]

25. PRESENTATION TO COUNCILLOR A. J. RUTHERFORD

The Mayor presented Councillor Rutherford with a record of his year in office for the 2013/14 Municipal Year.

Councillor Rutherford said that he and Councillor May were really sorry to have missed the Annual Meeting of Council and the following Inaugural Evening due to their attendance at one of HM the Queen's Garden Parties, and that it had been a real honour to represent Rhyl as its Mayor. Of course the year had a few low points, the biggest being the flood that hit the town in December, but there had been many more high points that he would always treasure.

26. MAY 2014 STATEMENT OF AUTHORISED PAYMENTS

The Chair referred to the list of authorised payments on the Number 1 Account for May 2014 (circulated with agenda) for Members approval.

RESOLVED that the payments be approved.

27. PRESENTATION OF TOWN CREST TO THE BELGIUM TOWN OF AARSCHOT

The Town Clerk reported that he had learned of an impressive piece of work undertaken by Mr Antoni Vitti, from Rhyl's Tourist Information office, on the lives of dozens of Aarschot, Leuven and Dendermonde refugees who settled in Rhyl during the First World War 100 years ago. Mr Vitti was going over to Aarschot on 3rd June to present the work to the people of the town so with the Mayor's and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee's authority he gave Mr Vitti a Town Crest to form part of the presentation.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk's action be approved.

28. INFORMATION ITEMS

Special MAG Meeting

The Town Clerk advised that a special meeting had been called to include all Town Councillors, at Russell House in Rhyl for 6.00pm on 10th July 2014.

Rhyl High School

The Town Clerk referred to the e-mail he had circulated around the table providing Members with an update on the progression of the new build and asked for all comments to be passed to Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James.

29. QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

30. 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.*

31. CO-OPTION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR FOR THE BODFOR WARD

The Town Clerk submitted his confidential report and copies of the applications received (circulated with agenda) for Members’ consideration.

***RESOLVED** that after being put to the vote by way of secret ballot Mr Christopher Stewart Ball be co-opted on to the Town Council to serve the Bodfor Ward.*

[All Councillors present with the exception of Councillor Ms J. Hughes, declared a personal interest in the above item due to knowing one or more of the applicants (two applicants had previously served on the Town Council), but remained in the Chamber and took a full part in the discussion and voting thereon]

32. CLOSURE OF MEETING

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

Mayor:

Date: