

At a Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on Wednesday 3rd September 2014, at the Civic Offices, Wellington Road Community Centre, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor P. Prendergast (Chair)

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

G. J. Nickels – Town Clerk
R. A. Hughes – Finance Officer
H. J. Windus – Personal Assistant & Secretary

30. APOLOGIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies were submitted from Councillors Mrs P. M. Jones (indisposed), J. May (work commitment) and D. Simmons (on holiday).

The Chair reported the sad passing of former Rhyl Town Councillor Mr Joe Nelson and Councillor Mrs E. M. Chard's father-in-law. A minute's silence was observed in their memory.

A sympathy card had been sent to Councillor Chard on the Town Council's behalf.

RESOLVED that a sympathy card be sent to Mr Nelson's daughters.

31. AUGUST RECESS – REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Further to Minute No.44 of the meeting of Council held on 16th July 2014, the Town Clerk submitted his report (circulated with agenda).

RESOLVED that the actions be approved.

32. JULY / AUGUST 2014 STATEMENT OF AUTHORISED PAYMENTS

The Finance Officer referred to the list of authorised payments on the Number 1 Account (circulated with agenda) for Members' approval and responded to Member's queries.

RESOLVED that the payments be approved.

33. REPRESENTATIVE ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATION: MARINE LAKE USERS FORUM

The Chair reported that the current representative Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James was unable to continue in the role and asked Members to consider making the current substitute, Councillor A. J. Rutherford, the new representative and appointing another as substitute.

RESOLVED that Councillor Rutherford be appointed as the new representative and Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE the substitute.

34. CONSULTATION: WELSH GOVERNMENT MARINE PLANNING DIVISION – SCOPING EXERCISE “Developing the Welsh National Marine Plan”

The Chair referred to the above document for Members’ consideration (circulated with agenda).

RESOLVED that document be received.

35. CONSULTATION: WELSH GOVERNMENT – HEALTH OF HOMELESS PEOPLE ADVISORY GROUP – “Hospital Discharge Protocol for Homeless People in Wales”

The Town Clerk referred to the above document (circulated with agenda) for Members’ consideration.

Members felt that the document was somewhat disappointing and rather than leaving them assured that homeless people were being engaged with and helped, it left them with more questions and concerns.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to respond asking the following questions:

- How many hostels are there in Denbighshire, accommodating how many people?
- Has Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board liaised with Social Services and other organisations?
- Is there provision for ex-service personnel?
- What is the catchment area?
- What kind of accommodation is required?
- How many members of staff are needed?

FURTHER RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended to enable the Town Clerk to act as a matter of urgency.

36. CONSULTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – “Home to School Transport Policy”

The Chair reported receipt of the above document (circulated with agenda) for Members consideration.

Generally speaking Members were pleased with the document but commented that there were perhaps more hazardous routes to schools in Rhyl than people might think, the ‘H’ bridge being one of them.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to respond stating the importance of providing safe routes to schools for all school children and if that is not always possible, then free transport should be provided.

FURTHER RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended to enable the Finance Officer to act as a matter of urgency.

37. CORRESPONDENCE: EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The Finance Officer presented his report and correspondence from UHY Hacker Young providing an unqualified audit opinion and next steps for the Town Council (circulated with agenda).

RESOLVED that the Annual Return be approved and the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be authorised to sign the Return on the Council's behalf.

FURTHER RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended to enable the Finance Officer to act as a matter of urgency.

38. CORRESPONDENCE: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: BUDGET PLANNING AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR FUTURE YEARS

The Town Clerk reported receipt of the above letter from the Leader of Denbighshire County Council (DCC) (circulated with agenda) and also a meeting he had had with DCC officers Mr Alan Smith and Mr David Davies, along with Prestatyn Town Council's Clerk, Mr Nigel Acott to discussed the potential for devolved services. Unfortunately the officers were unable to provide much information but thought that they would be in a position to in late autumn, which leaves the Town Council with very little time to consider any potential before setting its budget for 2015/16. The officers advised that other Town and Community Councils were putting monies aside in their budgets.

Members were concerned about the possible impact this would have on the Town Council's plans and finances and the point was also made that Town and Community Councils did not have to take up any services from the Local Authority, so some perspective was also needed.

Members thought it was worth talking to other Town and Community Councils in the County to explore the possibility of coming together to share the burden of services.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to:

- i) call a Special Meeting of Council when more information is provided by DCC to enable full realistic debate
- ii) write to the Leader to ask him to expand on the paragraph on the second page of his letter referring to the relatively short notice DCC could be giving Town and Community Councils once it was known which services it would be withdrawing, and with that in mind Town and Community Council's might want to give some thought to reconsidering their own budgets.

39. CORRESPONDENCE: CENTRAL AND EASTERN VICTIM SUPPORT

The Town Clerk referred to the above (circulated with agenda) for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the request to provide the Town Council with a presentation be approved for the New Year.

40. CORRESPONDENCE: NORTH WALES WOMEN'S CENTRE LIMITED

Further to Minute No.24 of the meeting held on 2nd July 2014 the Chair reported receipt of the above (circulated with agenda) inviting the Town Council to the Centre to see for themselves the work they do there over breakfast.

RESOLVED that the proposed presentation to Council be cancelled in favour of a visit to the Centre. The Town Clerk to e-mail dates to Members in due course.

41. CORRESPONDENCE: LEADER, DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - BOTANICAL GARDENS, RHYL.

Further to Minute No.24 of the meeting of Council held on 18th June 2014 the Chair referred to the above (circulated with agenda).

RESOLVED that the letter be received.

42. INFORMATION ITEM: NORTH EAST WALES FOOD WASTE PROJECT

The Chair reported receipt of a newsletter on the above (circulated with agenda).

A Member advised that the project was being officially launched on Thursday 20th November from 12pm until 1pm by the Welsh Minister for Natural Resources, Culture and Sport, John Griffiths AM.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to look into the possibility of a number of Town Councillors going along to have a look at the project.

43. PROGRESS REPORTS

(i) Rhyl Town and Area Plan

Nothing to report.

(ii) Rhyl Going Forward Officers

A Member reported that refurbishment works would begin shortly on the High Street.

44. MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS

The Town Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the Benefits Advice Shop inviting Town Councillors to their AGM in the Wellington Community Centre on Tuesday 23rd September, starting with a buffet at 6.30pm.

The Finance Officer advised that a further £5,000 had been allocated to Rhyl's Shop Front Improvement Scheme and asked Members to spread the word and ask any interested parties to contact the Town Council for further information.

The Town Clerk reported that Mr Paul Smith's secondment to the Welsh Government was coming to an end and that sadly his Denbighshire County Council post was being made redundant this month.

The Chair reminded Members of the Rhyl Show at the Town Hall on Saturday 6th September from 10.00am until 4.00pm and encouraged everyone to come along.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to send a letter to:

- i) Mr Smith thanking him for his work in Rhyl over the years which was much valued and that he will be very much missed as a trusted ally for the town and its Town Council.
- ii) Ms Sian Davies thanking her once again for a fantastic Air Show on an ever reducing budget.

45. 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.

46. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – PROGRESS REPORT

Further to Minute No. 52 of the special meeting of Council held on 20th August 2014 Officers provided progress report on actions taken since that meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be received

47. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed.

Chair:

Date: