

At a **SPECIAL MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Wellington Road, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

## **PRESENT**

Councillor Miss S. L. Roberts (Mayor)

Councillors B. Blakeley, Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, Miss E. M. Chard, Ms J. Hughes, A. R. James, Ms J. McAlpine, B. Mellor, Mrs W. M. Mullen-James, S. H. Ratcliffe, A. J. Rutherford, D. Simmons and T. Thomas.

Mr G. J. Nickels - Town Clerk  
Miss H. J. Windus – Deputy Town Clerk

### **102. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Councillors I. W. Armstrong (indisposed), B. F. Moylan (indisposed), P. Prendergast (on holiday), W. N. Tasker (on holiday), Rev. S. Walker (work commitment) and Miss C. L. Williams (work commitment).

### **103. 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.

### **104. DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED PROMENADE DEVELOPMENT**

Further to minute no.96 of the meeting of Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016, the Town Clerk submitted his confidential report (circulated with agenda) advising of the potential impact to the Town Council's finances and to Rhyl Council Tax payers of the different levels of contribution requested by Denbighshire County Council (£1m or £2m plus interest).

The Town Clerk advised that the preferred option for the Town Council would be for DCC to borrow the total amount required and for the Town Council to service its share of the loan. This would enable the Town Council to benefit from a lower interest rate. The costs to the Town Council and the charge payers would be £52,500 per annum for £1 million and £105,000 per year for £2 million.

The Town Clerk added that any support given at this stage should be 'in principle' and subject to any required consent of Welsh Government. A condition of which is that the Council must have been open and transparent with the residents throughout the approval process.

If Members decided to make a level of contribution they should agree on how to engage with the public in terms of future press releases and any form of consultation

process, if appropriate. To this end the Town Clerk suggested the use of Gunsmoke Communications.

Discussions took place around the following:

- The Town Council receiving a proportional return on its investment should the aquatic centre exceed the projected revenue level.
- The proposed entry fees (significantly higher than the Leisure Centre but on a par with or cheaper than other similar attractions in the North West).
- What would happen should DCC decide to sell the facility further down the line? Would the Town Council receive a proportional amount of the sale price in light of its investment?
- Talking to / informing Rhyl residents.
- The cost to Rhyl ratepayers and how they would feel about an increase in their Council precept.
- The importance of 'managing our message' successfully and using Gunsmoke Communications to get it right, and liaising with DCCs press office and Weber Shandwick.
- 100+ construction jobs and 80+ jobs created once opened.
- Using the Town Council's Reserves to reduce the burden on Rhyl Council Tax payers.
- Difficulty in balancing the positive aspects of the project against the negative impact on Council Tax
- The positive impact the aquatic centre would have on Rhyl in terms of increased footfall boosting the local economy and providing confidence for more investment.
- Feeling under pressure to make such an important decision so quickly.
- The Town Council 'leading' on joint consultations sessions with DCC and receiving due acknowledgement in all press releases, etc.

***RESOLVED*** that 'in principle' the Town Council will offer a £1m (£1.3m including interest) contribution to Denbighshire County Council for the construction of the aquatic centre, subject to any required consent of Welsh Government and public engagement with Rhyl residents.

## **105. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

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

Mayor: .....

Date: .....