

At a Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on Wednesday 5th May 2010, at the Civic Offices, Wellington Road Community Centre, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor D. A. J. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors J. B. Bellis, Mrs P. M. Butters, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, Mrs L. M. Edwards, Ms D. Hannam, Miss M. A. Jones, Mrs W. M. Mullen-James and G. J. Pickering.

Mr G. J. Nickels	-	Town Clerk
Mr P. M. Thomas	-	Finance Officer
Miss H. J. Windus	-	Personal Assistant & Secretary

220. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Councillors B. Blakeley (other commitment), J. Butterfield (other commitment), Mrs J. Butterfield (other commitment), C. Davies (indisposed), I. A. Gunning (other commitment), Ms G. A. Jones, Mrs P. M. Jones (indisposed), D. W. Lee (indisposed), Mrs M. McCarroll (other commitment) and G. Williams (family illness).

221. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2009/2010 PRE AUDIT

The Finance Officer presented his report (circulated with Agenda) for Members approval. The report set out the pre-audit statement of accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010, including the Balances Policy Statement and the Annual Assurance Statement for approval. The Finance Officer reported that some minor adjustments to the inventory and asset figures were still required but that a further report would be submitted when the external audit of the accounts had been called.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts and the Balances Policy Statement be approved.

222. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk submitted his report (circulated with Agenda) in relation to a recommendation made by the Risk Assessment Sub-Committee to advise Members of a change / modification to the Town Council's policy with regard to the appointment of representatives to outside bodies.

RESOLVED that report be approved.

223. ADVOCACY SERVICE IN DENBIGHSHIRE

The Chair reported receipt of correspondence from Mr Elfed Williams, Advocacy Officer for Older People in Denbighshire, seeking the Town Council's views on the current service provision (circulated with Agenda), via an attached questionnaire.

The Town Clerk suggested that the Members in attendance complete a joint questionnaire this evening on the Town Council's behalf, which he would then return to Mr Williams.

With regard to questions three and six, Members felt that the wording was unclear.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be instructed to return the questionnaire and convey Members' views on the way in which some of the questions were phrased.

224. CORRESPONDENCE: CENTRICA ENERGY – IRISH ZONE OFFSHORE WIND PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS

The Chair reported receipt of correspondence from Centrica Energy, advising that they had been awarded the 'Irish Sea Zone' by Crown Estates, and that exhibitions would be held during April in Holyhead, Llandudno and Liverpool (circulated with Agenda).

Members were disappointed to not have received this information sooner and asked if Centrica had any similar events planned over the coming months? Furthermore do Centrica link in with the nearby NPower Wind Farms in any way, and was there an opportunity for attracting 'community grants' for Rhyl, like the grants made by NPower?

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be instructed to write to Centrica to put Members' questions to them, and also to write to NPower to request an update on their second Wind Farm development.

225. INFORMATION: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, TOOLS AND POWERS

The Chair reported receipt of the above Home Office document (circulated with Agenda).

A Member felt that legislation to restrict the use of fireworks to just one day a year, namely the 5th November, would greatly reduce the distress felt by animals and their owners, and would also limit the mis-use of fireworks. The Member added that there was also too many abbreviations used throughout the document without sufficient explanation.

RESOLVED that the document be received.

226. INFORMATION: MARSH TRACKS

The Chair reported receipt of a press release from the Welsh Assembly Government (circulated with Agenda) announcing £500,000 for the Rhyl cycling facility.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be instructed to write to Marsh Tracks to ask when the development work will start and finish (in view of the current upheaval in connection with the new recycling facility in the area), and also to convey the Town Council's congratulations, which Members believe will be a huge asset to the town.

227. INFORMATION: COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCILS

The Chair reported receipt of a press release from the newly formed Betsi Cadwaladar Community Health Council (circulated with Agenda), advising the Town Council that a new structure came into being on 1st April 2010, namely that the Betsi Cadwaladar Community Health Council was the one integrated Health Council for North Wales encompassing all six counties (Gwynedd, Ynys Môn, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham).

RESOLVED that the information be received.

228. MEMBERS ITEM: HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTIONS

Councillor Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones reported that she had received representations from elderly residents worried that a new Denbighshire County Council policy would leave them struggling to move their wheelie bins to and from the rear of their properties on collection day. Councillor Chamberlain-Jones asked for confirmation of the service provided by Denbighshire in this regard.

The Town Clerk advised that he had contacted Denbighshire County Council, who had stated that there was no change to the current service provision, and that the moving of wheelie bins would continue where needed.

RESOLVED that the information be received.

229. MEMBERS ITEM: MAJOR POLICE INCIDENTS

Although Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield was not present at the meeting, the Town Clerk advised that he had tried on numerous occasions to speak to the relevant Police Officer, but that as yet, they had missed each other's calls.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that Councillor Butterfield had requested that the Police contact a Ward Member to inform them of major incidents that have taken place within their area, as has been the procedure in the past.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk will report back once contact has been made with the Police.

230. MEMBERS ITEM: PUBLIC NOTICEBOARDS IN RHYL

Councillor G. J. Pickering sought Members' support for public noticeboards to be introduced in every Ward outside of the town centre, to help to promote community events and hopefully reduce fly-posting.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk liaises with Councillor Pickering on a number of issues like management responsibility, maintenance, location of boards, funding, etc and reports back to a future meeting.

231. ADDITIONAL ITEM: 'RHYL WEEK'

The Town Clerk referred to this year's 'Rhyl Week' booklets distributed to Members this evening for their information and suggested that they take the surplus away with them to give to residents in their Wards.

RESOLVED that the booklets be received.

232. ADDITIONAL ITEM: POLICE AUTHORITY MEETING

The Town Clerk reported receipt of an invitation for Members to attend the next Police Authority Community Forum for Denbighshire at 7.00pm on Thursday 20th May 2010 at the Wellington Community Centre in Rhyl (copy circulated at the meeting).

The Town Clerk reminded Members that although the invitation was for all Members, only the Town Council's nominated representatives (Councillor B. Blakeley or Councillor J. B. Bellis as substitute) could speak on the Council's behalf.

RESOLVED that the invitation be received.

234. ADDITIONAL ITEM: TOWN CENTRES SUMMIT

The Town Clerk reported receipt of an invitation from Denbighshire County Council (copy circulated at the meeting) for the Town Council to consider sending a representative to a Town Centres Summit between 2.30pm and 6.30pm on Thursday 20th May 2010 at Ruthin Castle.

RESOLVED that the Mayor Elect will attend, diary permitting, with the Deputy Mayor Elect to go if she is unable to, accompanied by either the Town Clerk or the Finance Officer.

235. ADDITIONAL ITEM: REQUEST TO USE CHAMBER

The Town Clerk reported that Ysgol Bryn Hedydd had asked for permission to use the Town Council Chamber and Committee Room for the purpose of selecting a new Headteacher for the school.

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

236. 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.

237. CYRIL ROBERTS MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Town Clerk submitted his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) following a request made to the Town Council to purchase the Memorial Garden to be developed into six car parking spaces should a planning application for the re-development of the adjacent Chapel be approved.

RESOLVED that the request be declined.

238. NAMING OF NEW FOOTBRIDGE NEAR RHYL COLLEGE

The Chair reported receipt of confidential correspondence (circulated with Agenda) from Denbighshire County Council and suggested that the above item be withdrawn pending further information from the County Council.

RESOLVED that the above item be withdrawn.

239. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Finance Officer presented his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) following receipt of a request from a local author for the Council to contribute towards the costs of an autobiographical book that would feature many aspects of Rhyl's heritage.

RESOLVED that a contribution of £100 be approved.

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

240. RHYL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk submitted his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) seeking Members consideration of the future remit and membership of the Working Group. The previously identified set of actions was set out within the report and discussion quickly established that these were important and still necessary to be concluded. Discussion then centred on the best

way to achieve progress on the many detailed issues that would require liaison and negotiation with the Association and likely to take considerable time, knowledge and concerted effort to complete. Despite the reservations expressed in the light of the experience of the previous working group it was agreed that the best practical solution was to re-appoint the Working Group.

RESOLVED that:

- a) *the Committee reaffirms the requirement to undertake the set of actions related to Rhyl Community Association.*
- b) *a new Working Group be established and the Town Clerk be instructed to write to all Members (excluding those granted dispensation on all matters relating to the Rhyl Community Association) asking for expressions of interest in joining the new RCA Working Group*
- c) *the Town Clerk reports to the June meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee upon future action necessary.*

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

[Councillors J. B. Bellis and Mrs W. M. Mullen-James declared a prejudicial interest in the above item due to their positions as Members of the Rhyl Community Association, but indicated that they wished to use the dispensation granted to them to take part in the debate and vote]

241. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

The Town Clerk submitted his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) in relation to an ongoing request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The report explained how the request had been dealt with in accordance with the Council's policy since it had first been made in September 2009. The applicant had now been sent a letter clearly identifying that the matter was closed but also stating the option to appeal, if necessary, to the Information Commissioner if he remained dissatisfied. Following discussion and clarification of a number of points it was

RESOLVED that the action of the Town Clerk be confirmed.

242. MEETING WITH THE LEADER AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Town Clerk presented his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) advising Members of the outcome of his most recent meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive and visit to the Community Agency with the Town Mayor. The report referred to the long time the County Council had taken to facilitate the meeting which was required to follow up on several

important issues first raised with the Leader in 2008/2009. The Town Clerk reported that unfortunately the meeting had been unproductive and following discussion it was -

RESOLVED that the Leader and Chief Executive be invited to a future meeting to give them the opportunity to provide the Town Council with more comprehensive responses to the many questions and issues put to them over the past year.

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

243. COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Town Clerk submitted his confidential report (circulated with Agenda) identifying that the Welsh Assembly had introduced new legislation - The Local Government (Wales) Measure Act 2009. The Act designates Town and Community Councils as 'Planning Partners' in the developing of Community Strategies and places a number of new and important duties upon them. The report identified relevant detail from the Act and sought to relate the Town Council's new responsibilities to the current practice adopted by the Denbighshire County Council as the lead authority responsible for delivery of the strategy. The report recognised that there were differences in approach and the recent meeting with the County Council Leader and Chief Executive had sought to clarify matters, but unfortunately, this had not been possible. Arising out of this the report sought to determine how the Town Council wished to progress matters. The Town Clerk further advised of receipt of a letter (circulated at Meeting) from the Chief Executive in relation to the Community Strategy and which identified that Community Councils and Councillors had been involved in workshops and a survey and suggesting that Rhyl Town Council had chosen not to accept an invitation for a one-to-one meeting.

Finally the report sought to determine whether the Town Council wished to nominate one of its representatives on the North Wales Association of Town and Larger Community Councils to act as the Association's representative on the Denbighshire Community Strategy Partnership should an invitation be extended. Following discussion it was -

RESOLVED that:

- a) *the Town Clerk writes to the Welsh Assembly Government to outline its current situation with regard to the Community Strategy and seek further guidance or training on the legislation in this regard.*

- b) *the Town Clerk writes to Denbighshire County Council to inform them of the Town Council's contact with the Welsh Assembly and that the Council will advise them of their response as soon as possible, with a view to inviting Ms Eva Walters to a future meeting to discuss the way forward and to seek clarification of the invitation for a one-to-one meeting.*

- c) *the Town Clerk advises the North Wales Association of Town and Larger Community Councils that one of the Town Council's representatives can be nominated to act as the Association's representative on the Denbighshire Community Strategy Partnership should an invitation be extended.*

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

244. CLOSURE OF MEETING

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

Chair:

Date: