

At a **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 15th June 2011 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Wellington Road, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James (Mayor)

Councillors B. Blakeley, Mrs J. Butterfield, Ms D. Hannam, Miss G. A. Jones, Miss M. A. Jones, D. W. Lee, Mrs M. McCarroll, G. J. Pickering, A. J. Rutherford, T. C. Thomas and D. A. J. Thomas.

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

16. OPENING OF MEETING

In the absence of the Mayor's Chaplain, Rev. Prebendary John Glover, Lay Preacher Ms Jenny Hadley commenced proceedings by leading all present in prayer.

17. APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Councillors J. B. Bellis (other commitment), Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones (other commitment), I. A. Gunning (family commitment), W. N. Tasker (on holiday), G. Williams (indisposed) and the Town Clerk, Mr G. J. Nickels (on holiday).

The Mayor referred to this year's Queen's Honours List and to Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield's MBE for her services to the Rhyl community and to Mr P. Frost's MBE for his services to the Rhyl RNLI Lifeboat Station and on the Town Council's behalf, offered its sincere congratulations.

18. MINUTES

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

Annual Council - 18th May 2011 - Min.Nos. 1-15

A Member commented that some of the information on the Town Council's website appeared to be out of date. The Finance Officer accepted that, at times, certain information might be marginally out of date and explained that the website was updated as and when officers had the time to do so. He invited the Member to submit a list of relevant areas requiring attention and promised to give them due consideration. The Finance Officer added that it had been hoped that the Town Council's new website in partnership but led by the BRAND project would have been available by now, but unfortunately it's launch had been delayed.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs M. McCarroll and seconded by Councillor B. Blakeley and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

Planning - 1st June 2011 - Min.Nos. 1-5
Committee

Proposed by Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James and seconded by Councillor Ms G. A. Jones and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

To Confirm or otherwise:

Finance & General - 1st June 2011 - Min.Nos. 1-16
Purposes Committee

Proposed by Councillor D. A. J. Thomas and seconded by Councillor B. Blakeley and **RESOLVED** as a correct record and confirmed for action.

19. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor referred to the list of engagements she and the Deputy Mayor had attended since the Annual Meeting of Council (circulated with Agenda) for Members information, and in particular to the Centenary event at the Rhyl Miniature Railway, the Pirates Extravaganza at the SunCentre and the Marine Lake and the 'Race for Life' event, which she had really enjoyed.

The Mayor advised that Miss Rhyl would be accompanying her to a selection of the town's events during the next 12 months and added that Miss Rhyl took part in the 'Race for Life' and had done very well.

The Mayor directed Members to view the display board in the Chamber, which featured some photographs taken at the aforementioned events. Councillor Mullen-James stated that the board would be a regular addition to her Mayor's Report to each Council meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

20. PRESENTATION TO COUNCILLOR MRS M. McCARROLL

The Mayor invited Councillor McCarroll to receive her Record of Office compiled during her year as Mayor of Rhyl 2010-2011.

21. QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

22. 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.

23. PRESENTATION: COMMUNITY PAYBACK PILOT PROJECT

The Mayor referred to the Town Clerk's confidential report (circulated with Agenda) and welcomed Mr Graham Thomas from Probation Services Wales and Mr Phil Hare from the Community Safety Partnership and invited them to address Members on a proposed scheme for the Town Council's consideration.

Before beginning the presentation Mr Thomas advised that the written proposal previously circulated to Members with their committee papers had been changed at the last minute and that his proposed scheme would now be a joint initiative by the Probation Service and the Community Safety Partnership.

Mr Thomas reported that Community Payback replaced the old Community Service scheme and was designed to be both a punishment for the offender and a way of creating engagement with the community. An offender would work between 40 and 300 hours in the community, dependent on the nature and severity of the offence he or she had committed and work would be undertaken during their free time on top of their normal hours of work or education. Offenders would learn new skills like grass cutting and painting within a disciplined framework, which could lead to future employment. Mr Thomas added that the new joint approach enabled enforcement to be carried out by the Community Safety Partnership allowing fixed penalties to be issued to those found to be creating problems like fly-tipping, for example, in an attempt to put a stop to re-offending. Mr Thomas stated that Community Payback work was not used as a cheap alternative for businesses or Local Authorities to replace their workforces, and would not take work away from anyone.

Mr Thomas showed some photographic examples of the work his team had already undertaken, i.e. the repainting of street furniture in the High Street, cutting back unruly or unsightly garden undergrowth from owners of private gardens who were no longer able to do so themselves, maintaining the grounds of Bodelwyddan Castle, the clearing of alleyways and fitting of home safety alarms under the 'Safer Homes' initiative, etc.

Mr Thomas and Mr Hare advised that:

- the proposed service would be a dedicated one for Rhyl alone.
- the scheme would utilise the four full-time STARS North Wales employees and their local knowledge and expertise in particular areas and the Town Council's money would be used to grow the team via the creation of future employment.
- the service would be provided over 100 days per annum at a cost of £100 per day for labour, with any additional costs to be met by the Town Council. Therefore the scheme would cost at least £10,000 annually.
- work would be carried out in 6-7 hours each day and would be entirely at the Town Council's direction.

In response to Members questions and comments, Mr Thomas and Mr Hare stated that:

- there was no double charging for the transferring of waste when using skips.
- the Welsh Assembly Government was currently funding two of the Supervisor posts, but that this would stop at the end of April 2012.
- all employees and offenders were insured by Probation Wales.
- weekend work would be included if needed.
- the Town Council's requirements would be managed into full daily packages of work to maximise value for money.
- the 'Tidy Towns' and 'Keep Wales Tidy' initiatives as well as Property Services were currently meeting the costs of materials.

- the scheme would carry out work which is not being done now and might not be done in the future if possible Denbighshire County Council's cutbacks impact in this area of provision.

At this point Members determined that they needed the additional information given in writing by way of a further report so that they could consider the detail alongside another potential scheme. Mr Thomas agreed to provide the report.

At the conclusion of their presentation, the Mayor thanked Mr Thomas and Mr Hare for their time and they left the Chamber allowing Members to absorb and discuss the proposed scheme.

After prolonged debate and on further reflection, Members determined that they were unhappy with the significant changes to the proposed scheme, which were far removed from the four Members' original objectives to provide additional environmental improvement works in Rhyl to enhance the current level carried out by Denbighshire County Council.

Some Members were uncomfortable with the apparent shift towards the Town Council picking up the work of Denbighshire County Council, should it decide to withdraw such non-statutory services during the impending difficult financial times, particularly if redundancies were made at Denbighshire County Council as a result.

A Member made the point that perhaps the Members with dual roles as Denbighshire County Councillors should be raising these serious concerns at County level to influence policy decisions, rather than devising schemes like the ones on the table, which effectively meant that Rhyl taxpayers would be paying twice to keep their town clean and tidy. Once via their Council Tax bills and twice via the Town Council's budget.

RESOLVED that on being put to the vote, and with regret, the Town Council scraps the proposed Community Payback Pilot Project as the original objectives could not be delivered in a way that was satisfactory to the Town Council.

24. CLOSURE OF MEETING

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

Mayor:

Date: