



### **To Confirm or otherwise:**

Finance & General - 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012 - Min.Nos. 87-106  
Purposes Committee

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

#### **51. MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor referred to the list of engagements he and the Deputy Mayor had attended since the last meeting of Council (circulated with Agenda) for Members' information, and in particular to the Kids Fun Club's AGM and the town's Remembrance Sunday services.

#### **52. PRESENTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE AND DISTRICT NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD 2013**

The Mayor welcomed the Leader of Denbighshire County Council, Councillor H. Evans, Corporate Director, Mr Hywyn Williams and National Eisteddfod officials to the Council Chamber and invited them to address Members.

Firstly, Councillor Evans offered his congratulations to Councillor May on his election to the Town Council, before going on to stress how culturally important the festival was for Wales and for Denbighshire. Councillor Evans said that he wanted Rhyl to play its part in welcoming over 150,000 visitors to the area and not miss out on the benefits that this huge opportunity will bring.

Mr Nic Parry (Chair of the 2013 Eisteddfod Finance Committee) reported that Rhyl was one of just two areas not contributing financially or organising any community fundraising activities, and although they had done really well in raising £200,000 so far, they were £100,000 short of their £300,000 target and needed Rhyl's help.

Mr Alwyn Roberts (Deputy Organiser) added that the entire Eisteddfod would cost £3.4 million with an expected income of between £6 and £8 million for the area. With over 800 caravans anticipated and many more people staying in local guest houses and hotels, Rhyl should be grasping the opportunity to secure a good portion of those bookings to boost its economy, as well as showcasing itself across the 150 hours of broadcasting on TV, radio and on-line worldwide. Mr Roberts advised that there were a number of projects the Town Council could assist with and that he would contact the Town Clerk with further details.

Mr Ieuan Roberts (Local Committee Member) explained that he had lived in Rhyl for 35 years and cared passionately about it. He had got a committee together just two months ago and had already got Ysgol Dewi Sant's PTA, Clwyd Leisure, the White Rose Centre, the Pavilion Theatre, local band The Informers, Rhyl Folk Club and Rhyl Rotary onboard. Mr Roberts asked for the Town Council's help to make sure that Rhyl made its mark.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Members expressed their support for Rhyl joining in with the preparations for the Eisteddfod and the Mayor advised that the Town Council would further consider the level of assistance it could offer at its Finance and General Purposes Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

**RESOLVED** that support for the *Eisteddfod* be re-considered at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

**53. PRESENTATION: LEADER OF DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Mayor once again welcomed Councillor H. Evans along with Mr G. Boase and Mr T. Booty to the meeting and invited them to address the issues raised by the Town Council as agreed at the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

Councillor Evans explained that as stated in his written response (circulated to Members by e-mail earlier today) he would be focussing on three of the issues raised this evening – the future of the Member Area Groups, the Rhyl Going Forward Strategy and the Rhyl Town Council's own plan 2012-2017.

The Town Clerk advised that any further discussion or decisions to be made as a result of this item should take place at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

**Future of Member Area Groups (MAGs)**

Councillor Evans explained that these groups were established to strengthen the role of Denbighshire County Councillors by providing the opportunity to discuss matters affecting their town with senior County Council officers. Councillor Evans stressed the importance of County Councillors raising items at the MAGs as he was looking to allow the groups input into Denbighshire's three Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Evans referred to the Charter, which was due to be finalised in April / May 2013 and encouraged the Town Council to take a full role in its formulation to ensure it worked to the benefit of both authorities, and talked about the importance of a clear line being drawn between County and Town Councillors and the accountability of County Councillors, particularly from an audit perspective.

Mr Boase stated that the MAGs should be a forum for County Councillors in their respective towns, but that briefing sessions with Town Councillors could be held prior to them, bringing the Rhyl MAG in line with the other five area MAGs. Mr Boase added that County Council officers would of course still attend Town Council meetings when necessary.

In response to Councillors' questions and comments, the officers advised that:

- the change to the Rhyl MAG would not be put before Denbighshire's full Council because it was only an issue here in Rhyl.
- they agreed that better communication from Rhyl's County Councillors to Rhyl's Town Councillors was the key.
- they were committed to the joint briefing sessions as the Town Council's involvement was crucial and that very few items would be confidential from now on. Minutes of these sessions would be offered to the Town Clerk.

- policy had been informed by the MAGs and their predecessors and that the change to the Rhyl MAG was more about the County Councillors accountability and their responsibility for Town Councillors as there was only so much Denbighshire's officers could do.
- they were sorry if the change left the Rhyl County and Town Councillors feeling uncomfortable, but they were not prepared to risk damaging reports from the Auditor.
- the MAGs would strengthen the Charter.

### Rhyl Going Forward Strategy

Mr Booty acknowledged that the four planned Delivery Groups had never been established and advised that this was due to a lack of resources within a small team, which ultimately did not offer value for money, when other groups had arisen like the Town Centre Forum, etc.

Mr Booty said that a small 'task and finish' governance group was to be set up to help to progress the overall strategy, which two of the Rhyl Councillors had volunteered to sit on.

Mr Booty stated that the strategy was a different mechanism for Rhyl as opposed to a Town Plan, as being developed for Corwen, Denbigh, Llangollen, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, Ruthin and St. Asaph, as not only had it begun well before the Town Plans initiative, it was in recognition of Rhyl's situation being unique from other towns', and would bring in £30 million worth of investment over the coming years.

In response to Councillors' questions and comments the officers advised that:

- the Programme Board will continue in its original format with input from Rhyl Town Council.
- there have been too many plans and groups for Rhyl in the past and the RGF strategy was now looking to simplify them all by giving more 'edge' to fewer projects to make more of a difference.
- Town Councillors could input via the small task and finish group.
- there was an unhelpful perception among some County Councillors representing other areas in Denbighshire that Rhyl was a constant drain on resources, attracting an awful lot of the County's funding, which was not the case, and that actually the RGF strategy was under funded and under resourced for the scale of its objectives. Councillor Evans stated that he would address this with the Chief Executive and was determined to make the strategy happen.
- Rhyl was finally on the right track, with Denbighshire County Council now compulsory purchasing buildings like Costigans and the Honey Club rather than relying on funding from other areas in the past, which was testament to the stronger support being offered to Rhyl.
- they were currently applying all of the pressure they could to move the Ocean Plaza project on.

Rhyl Town Council Plan

The Chair of the Town Council's SMART group, Councillor A. J. Rutherford, informed Councillor Evans of the group's remit and work so far on developing a clear and prioritised plan of its own.

Councillor Evans said that this was a good approach and offered to return to the Council Chamber to discuss it further once the plan was complete.

On behalf of the Town Council, the Mayor thanked the Leader and officers for attending.

**54. QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

**55. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

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

Mayor: .....

Date: .....