

**PUBLIC Minutes of Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council**

**Finance Governance and Personnel Committee Meeting**

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**Present:** Cllrs David Owens (Chair), Linda Edwards, John Hedley Jones, Hugh Shepardson, Bob Walpole

**Officers:** Huw Thomas (RFO), Shân Loudon

**(Upstairs room, Burry Port Institute 10am – 11.45am)**

**Absent:** Cllr Peter Freeman

**1. To receive apologies for absence**

No apologies had been received.

**2. To receive members' declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and the Special meetings held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 and Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

Subject to three typos, the minutes of the above meetings were approved as a true record.

Action: Admin Assistant

**4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes**

The Chair expressed disappointment in relation to the discussion regarding the set up of the community hub, that approval had been given at the December meeting of this committee but when discussion took place in the Town Council meeting, a member voted against the proposal. It was noted that the proposal took into account that it would take 3 to 6 months to apply for grant funding and that the hub would only be used for office accommodation during that time and not open to the general public.

**5. To consider the budget monitoring report**

The budget monitoring reports for all Committees had previously been circulated. The Acting Town Clerk went through the report with members, identifying any exceptions.

The underspend of the Facilities and Assets Committee had been referred to that committee and it was noted that this was no longer the case due to recent purchases ie storage containers. It was discussed that the Town Council base the precept on projects that it plans to undertake during the following year and that it needs to ensure that resources are available to carry out any proposed projects.

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Cllr Hugh Shepardson commented that it was gratifying to see the income received from Pembrey Memorial Hall was ahead of budget.

The issue of the remaining space available at Dolau Fan Cemetery was discussed. It was agreed to refer this item to the next Burial Sub Committee meeting.

**Action: Assistant Town Clerk**

It was noted that the expenditure for this Committee was at 60.8% as member allowances had not yet been shown but are due to be paid in January. There are outstanding HR and translation costs to be paid, but invoices have not been received as yet. The rates payable for the Copperworks empty building are still unresolved and it was agreed that the Acting Clerk would follow this up.

**Action: Acting Clerk to email all Councillors re allowances**  
**Acting Clerk to contact Carmarthenshire County Council re Copperworks rates**

With reference to Regeneration and Community Engagement spend, there are invoices due in, in relation to Christmas lights. Cllr Hugh Shepardson commented that he had received numerous compliments about the display this year.

It was noted that the community engagement budget was underspent but that there is now a CDO in place to organise 2020/21 events. A question was raised as to where the income from the Town of Culture Launch Concert would be allocated. It was agreed that the Acting Clerk would investigate.

**Action: Acting Clerk**

The budget monitoring report was accepted by all members.

## **6. Consideration of staff and Councillor training**

A document showing the training modules provided by One Voice Wales was circulated with the agenda. After discussion, it was agreed that, when training dates are available, they would be circulated to committee members. It was also agreed that the module list be circulated to all committee members, asking each committee to come back to the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee with requirements. If any bespoke training is arranged at the Town Council premises, it could be offered to other local councils. It was noted that module 21 "Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced" could be relevant to members of this committee.

**Action: Assistant Town Clerk**

## **7. Update on 2020/21 budget**

The updated budget was circulated. Following the previous meeting, the budget had been referred back to committees to make savings in order to achieve an increase in the precept of between 10% and 14%. Currently, £220,000 is held in reserves. The safe level for reserves was discussed and the Council would need to hold £160,000 to cover three months. The recommendation is between three and nine months.

After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Hugh Shepardson and seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards that a precept increase of 9.9% should be recommended to Town Council. All members voted in favour.

## 8. Consideration of a review of Standing Orders

The Acting Clerk informed members that he had compared the Council's Standing Orders with the model Standing Orders recommended by NALC. The Standing Orders are approved at each Annual Meeting. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr John Hedley Jones and seconded by Cllr Hugh Shepardson that the Clerk review the current Standing Orders and revert to the February committee meeting with recommended amendments.

Action: Acting Clerk

## 9. Update on apprenticeship scheme

The Clerk informed members that discussion had taken place with the Cemetery Superintendent regarding taking on an apprentice for a role at the cemetery. Members were informed that only one position had been filled out of three for the role of Cemetery/Facilities Operative. It was noted that time needs to be allocated to train and develop an apprentice and that the benefit to the organisation will be in the final two years.

At present, an office apprentice is not being considered, due to the workload of the CDO.

## 10. To consider any referred matters from the other Committees

One item had been referred from the Facilities and Assets Committee, the appointment of a solicitor. The Acting Clerk informed members that he had contacted four solicitors regarding possibly working with the Town Council. Only three had replied. After discussion, it was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Bob Walpole and seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that Gomer Williams be appointed to manage the asset transfer of Station toilets.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Hugh Shepardson and seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards that the meeting move into camera. All members were in agreement.

*In camera* - That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

## 11. To confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Subject to the addition of Cllr Bob Walpole to those present, the minutes of the meeting were confirmed as a true record.

## 12. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

## 13. Consideration of the Schedule of Accounts

The schedule of accounts was discussed. A request was made that any unusual items have an explanatory note, which was agreed by all members.

Action: Acting Clerk

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**14. Consideration of outstanding invoices**

A number of outstanding invoices were discussed.

**15. Update on staffing issues**

No matters were discussed.