

(PUBLIC) Minutes of Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Finance Governance and Personnel Committee Meeting

Wednesday 10th November 2020

This meeting was held via video conference under the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) 2020

Present: Cllrs David Owens (Chair), Linda Edwards, Peter Freeman (2.10pm), John Hedley Jones, Hugh Shepardson, Bob Walpole

In attendance: Cllr Michael Theodoulou

Officers: Huw Thomas (Clerk/RFO), Shan Loudon (Deputy Clerk)

Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)

2pm – 3.30pm

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Andrew Phillips.

2. To receive members' declarations of interest.

None were made.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Finance, Governance and Personnel meetings held on Tuesday 13th October 2020.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes.

None were raised.

5. Consideration of budget monitoring report

The Clerk/RFO guided members through the report for September, highlighting the exceptions. To prevent repetition, he would only be highlighting those that are specific to this month, rather than ongoing ones previously noted.

Facilities and Assets

Regarding income there was a small amount from the Cylch and Gerran's Gym. Income at the cemetery was also ahead of target.

Regarding expenditure:

- Cemetery costs under general maintenance – this was for the servicing of shoring equipment and for bulk loam.

- Equipment repair was for purchase of a roof ladder.
- Halls and Institute cleaning costs – at present this is where the costs for the portaloos at the harbour was being collected.
- The costs under maintenance and repair were for the concrete repairs to the Institute building.
- The refuse disposal were quarterly costs not monthly.
- This left their budget at 46% spent at the mid-way point.

In response to a query he confirmed that the budget had been adjusted and a forthcoming vehicle purchase would spend its budget.

He reminded members that the main focus for the whole budget was on loss of income, and that the budget adjustment had been made with the assumption of resumption of income from facilities in the 4th quarter of the year. This he felt was unlikely and he advised that this would mean a further loss which could amount to £13,500.

In response to a query on the application for relief of loss of income, that their application for the 1st quarter had been successful for £4000, but he had no information on what would happen for the remaining quarters as it had not yet been announced.

Finance, Governance and Personnel

Regarding expenditure, as staff training was located in this budget it had been necessary for the training of a Facilities and Assets staff member to be allocated to this budget.

An additional exception was the purchase of a zoom licence, to allow the Council to run the community forum meetings and to meet with third party organisations who did not have Teams.

At present the budget was at 55.8% of its target, however the annual payment of the insurance was included in this figure.

In response to a query regarding election costs, the Clerk/RFO stated that he had not yet heard back from the County Council on whether a request for a by-election had been made or not. If no request had been made the budgeted amount would be absorbed into the general reserves at the end of the year, unless it was vired elsewhere.

Regeneration and Community Engagement

- The grant funding for the Digital Community Project was for the iPads currently being used by the Council to enable digital participation in meetings. These would need to be returned in due course for their primary purpose.
- A community grant of £1500 had been awarded to Pembrey AFC.
- The blue plaque for Francis Randall had been purchased. The expense had to be shown in the budget even though the payment was covered by a donation elsewhere.
- The expenditure on community support was for the Fruity Friday programme.
- The total budget was at 21.8% however what remained would need to cover the Christmas lighting, which will be a significant spend.

The Clerk confirmed that there was no expense shown for Meals on Wheels as that had only started in October. Members noted that the programme was being well received by the community.

6. Update on asset transfers.

Members noted that due to the solicitor who handled the Councils cases being on compassionate leave following recent bereavement, it had not been possible for the Clerk/RFO to arrange a meeting. He had however spoken to their associate on two matters. Firstly the setting of a completion date for the sale of Copperworks was under the control of the purchaser not the seller, and secondly that progression of cases between the Council and the County Council were being delayed due to difficulties in communication with the relevant department.

Members queried the first statement as the request had been to seek advice for a reasonable completion date so as to advise the purchaser, which the Clerk confirmed was the question he had put to them. Members discussed what the actual resolution wording was and at which meeting it was made. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that a referral to Town Council had been made regarding the valuation process and sale price and advised caution as work was still in progress on that issue, the results of which may affect the sale.

7. To consider the PWLB rules and constraints.

The Clerk/RFO informed members that the sequence of events needed to draw down a PWLB loan had been ascertained and would be followed once he was authorised.

- Application to Welsh Government to assess eligibility
- Apply to PWLB for loan to include a project plan.

He confirmed that the security of the loan was the income from the precept, over a period of 15 years. The project plan to accompany the application would need to be clear on the stages to allow drawing down of funds at those points, rather than piecemeal.

8. Referral from Major Projects Sub Committee.

The Chair of this Committee had been appointed as the Chair of the eponymous Sub-Committee. He provided members with a synopsis of the recent meeting as follows:

Not having a terms of reference, they had set their own, subsequently approved by its parent Committee.

- To review a complete list of projects
- Prioritise that list
- Make recommendations to the Facilities and Assets Committee

Members were agreed that the list of projects and costings should be discussed in camera.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the meeting should proceed in camera. **RESOLVED**.

Members noted the criteria for assessing the projects and the prioritised works.

The recommendation of the sub-Committee had been approved by the Facilities and Assets Committee at its recent meeting.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards to recommend to the Town Council for approval of the changes to the loan request and the intended allocation of the proceeds of the sale of Copperworks. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Referral to Town Council

9. Review of One Voice Wales Module 21 training.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED** seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole for the meeting to come out of its in-camera session for the remainder of the public meeting. **RESOLVED.**

Members were unanimous in their approval of the recent training they had received. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that a number of useful resources and information had arisen from the meeting.

10. Consideration of the Independent Remuneration Panel draft Annual Report 2021/22

Members noted that the changes made to this draft report would only affect decisions for the 2021/22 budget.

It was noted that this information would have to be incorporated into the next year's budget when that exercise began.

11. Any referred matters from other Committees.

None had been referred.

12. Any other urgent matters at the discretion of the Chair.

None were raised.

Cllr Peter Freeman **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole for the meeting to proceed in camera. **RESOLVED.**

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.

13. To confirm the minutes of the Finance, Governance and Personnel meetings held on Tuesday 13th October 2020.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones, that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**

14. Matters arising.

Members discussed outstanding invoices.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards for a demand to be issued. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

Ed Davies left the meeting at 3.08pm Shân Loudon continued the minutes

15. To consider schedule of accounts

Cllr Hugh Shepardson proposed, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that the schedule of accounts be accepted. **APPROVED**

16. Consideration of outstanding invoices

This was discussed under matters arising.

17. Update on staffing issues

Staffing issues were discussed.