

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

**Finance Governance and Personnel Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
**Dydd Mawrth 9<sup>fed</sup> Tachwedd 2021**

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

**Present:** Cllrs Linda Edwards, John Hedley Jones, Andrew Phillips, Michael Theodoulou and Bob Walpole.

**Apologies:** Cllr Hugh Shepardson.

**Absent:** Cllrs Peter Freeman and Robert John

**Officers:** Huw Thomas (Clerk/RFO) and Shân Loudon (Deputy Town Clerk)

**Minute taker:** Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)

**2pm – 2.55pm**

**1. To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Hugh Shepardson.

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

None were declared.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the Finance, Governance and Personnel meetings held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021.**

Cllr John Hedley Jones **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that the minutes of the meeting 12<sup>th</sup> October were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**.

Provided a requested correction was included, Cllr John Hedley Jones **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**.

Cllr Linda Edwards abstained from the above vote as she had left the meeting early.

**4. Consideration of budget monitoring report.**

Before considering the report members were asked to note that a query had been raised as to the information this Committee should receive as part of its agenda in relation to the detail for other Committee budgets. The Clerk/RFO advised that at present there was a lot of duplication of reporting. Members discussed the situation in depth noting that as individual Councillors they were free to request any Committees papers or access them via the website.

The Clerk/RFO gave his report based on the high-level summary for all Committees followed by the detail for this Committee's budget, as an example of what the procedure could be like.

The overall summary for the other Committees was as follows:

Facilities & Assets – overall net stands at 55.11%, primarily because of purchasing the new van in the month which made up £11,000 of the £13,000 the Committee was currently overbudget.

Regeneration and Community Engagement – expenditure stood at 48.57%, predominantly because the Committee had not yet spent any money from the Public Participatory budget or awarded any start up grants.

Finance, Governance & Personnel.

- Employee costs caused a negative variance through not being paid out in the same even distribution during the year as the budget.
- Telephones – a catch up payment for a mobile that had not been billed for.
- Stationery and bank charges were higher due to having to bank more cash.
- Licences were inflated because the PPL and PRS annual licence costs had been paid.

On a Year to Date basis the FGP budget stood at 56.5% of its expenditure, which put it roughly £9000 over budget. Members were reminded that many of the incurred costs were one time annual payments while this report was given monthly. It was also noted that IT costs were inflated due to the costs for servicing remote working of Councillors and Staff.

Overall the Town Council stood at 50.69%, which was slightly over budget.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Andrew Phillips that from now on the Committee receive a High-level summary for the whole Council and the detail for this Committees budget, as part of the budget monitoring report. **RESOLVED**.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

## **5. Consideration of schedule of accounts.**

Members noted the schedule gave the detail for the variances discussed in the previous item.

Members discussed the purpose of this item, and accepted the Clerk/RFO's advice that this item did not duplicate any work for him.

## **6. Update on asset transfers.**

Members noted that the solicitor had been on annual leave. The Clerk/RFO and Mayor were due to attend the offices to sign the documentation in relation to Pembrey Recreation Ground.

There had been little progress on the other transfers.

## **7. Consideration of outstanding invoices.**

There were no outstanding invoices to consider.

## **8. To consider the 2022/23 budget.**

The Clerk/RFO reminded members of the agreed plan, to produce a forecast for the remainder of this year's budget to inform the budget setting. That forecast showed the Committee coming in 3% over budget primarily for the IT costs and additional licence costs outlined in previous budget monitoring reports.

He asked members for advice on what basis they would like the draft to be produced, eg based on RPI or otherwise.

Members discussed the matter in detail and **AGREED** for the Clerk/RFO to produce his draft budget for 2022/23 based on the best advice available in relation to RPI increases, salary increases, utility increases and any other likely areas of cost increases.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

#### **9. Confirmation of the appointment of the internal auditor.**

Members noted the advice of the Clerk/RFO in relation to the appointment of the internal auditor.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that a recommendation be made to the Town Council to seek to reappoint the current internal auditor. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

#### **10. Consideration of the cost of continuing to provide a facility for members to work remotely (referral from Town Council 20/10/21).**

Members noted the costs to purchase 18 tablets to facilitate members continuing to work paperless and remotely. This would be in addition to the equipment needed to facilitate hybrid meetings from the Senior Citizens Hall.

Members discussed whether the cost could be vired from different headings, paid for from reserves, deferred until the next budget or split into 2 purchase events.

Cllr Bob Walpole **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that the items be purchased now and seek to vire the cost from different headings within this Committee's budget.

In the ensuing vote 4 members voted in favour with 1 against and 0 abstentions. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

#### **11. Consideration of Christmas office opening times.**

Members noted that this was a recurring item for this Committee. They also noted the advice of the Clerk/RFO.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that the Council would be open on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of December. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the meeting proceed in camera. **RESOLVED.**

Members noted the update from the Clerk/RFO in relation to a staffing matter.

Meeting ended 2.55pm