

(PUBLIC) Minutes of Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Finance Governance and Personnel Committee Meeting

Tuesday 8th June 2021

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

Present: Cllrs David Owens (Chair), Linda Edwards, Peter Freeman, John Hedley Jones, Andrew Phillips, Hugh Shepardson (left 2.37pm), Michael Theodoulou and Bob Walpole.

Apologies: Cllr Robert John

Officers: Huw Thomas (Clerk/RFO), Shan Loudon (Deputy Town Clerk), Louise Robinson (Community Development Officer).

Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)

2pm – 3.35pm

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Robert John.

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 4th May, Tuesday 11th May and Thursday 27th May 2021.

Cllr Linda Edwards **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones that the minutes of the meeting of 4th May 2021 were accurate. **RESOLVED.**

Cllr Michael Theodoulou stated his abstention from the above vote as he had not been present at the meeting.

Cllr Linda Edwards **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman that the minutes of the meeting of 11th May were accurate. **RESOLVED.**

Cllrs John Hedley Jones, Andrew Phillips and Michael Theodoulou stated their abstention from the above meeting as they had not been present at the meeting.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Andrew Phillips that the minutes of the meeting of 27th May 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 explained that the April Budget Monitoring report was not yet available. This was due to the limitations of the financial software as it is unable to run two financial years concurrently.

Members had received a draft of the annual return statement which would be put in front of the Town Council at its next meeting. He summarised the statement, explaining that any variances in excess of 15% would need detailed analysis for submission to Audit Wales. There were two such instances in this report, caused by unbudgeted income from S106 and the Places for Nature grant, and the associated expenditure. There had also been approved expenditure from reserves to provide the harbour toilets, the cemetery gates, and structural repairs to the Memorial Institute. Members noted that they had acknowledged the risks in using the reserves during the year when they approved the decisions.

In response to a query the Clerk/RFO stated that having investigated the reserve levels over the past 4 years they were now at 2.64 months of gross expenditure. He suggested that it may be appropriate to revisit the Council’s reserves policy.

Members **AGREED** to include on their agenda to consider the reserves policy following submission of the annual return.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk

Members discussed the contents of the insurance policy and asked the Clerk/RFO to provide them with a copy of the renewal pack for information.

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

6. Update on asset transfers.

Members noted that the proceeds from the sale of Copperworks had been received.

The Clerk/RFO stated that in relation to the lease for the Pembrey Community education centre, the County Council would need to approve the final lease agreement. Having received a copy of the lease he would contact the Pembrey Community Growing Association to see what their concerns were.

Members noted the next priorities of the solicitor would be paperwork around the Pembrey School matter and the Station Toilets. There were also 2 inactive items that needed completion in the form of signatures.

7. Update on working arrangements.

Members noted that with the kickstarter posts about to start, there would be some re-arranging taking place with new risk assessments made to allow the CDO and the office kickstarters to work in the upstairs of the Memorial Institute with the Administrative Assistant to return to the main office.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Andrew Phillips that selection for the kickstarter posts be undertaken by Council Officers.

In the ensuing vote 6 members voted in favour with 0 abstentions and 1 against. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: CFS/CDO

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Linda Edwards that the Council in principle accept requests for work experience placements, provided that any familial links be cleared by the Clerk/RFO. **RESOLVED**.

Cllr Hugh Shepardson left the meeting at 2.37pm

8. Update on risk assessment.

Members noted the update from the Clerk/RFO on the next steps on uploading the financial risk assessments into the risk assessment software.

9. Update on appraisals.

Members heard the update from the Clerk/RFO that the appraisals should be complete prior to the next Committee meeting.

10. Update on internal auditor report.

Members heard that the documentation had been submitted to the internal auditor who was aware of the deadlines for final submission and approvals needed.

11. Update on pay progression.

The Clerk/RFO informed members that the County Council did not yet know the latest figures on pay progression.

12. Update on training.

The Deputy Clerk informed members that a system had been put in place to monitor training for staff and councillors and a draft policy would be circulated prior to the July meeting for consideration.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk

Members discussed the need for a training policy.

13. Update from Major Projects Group.

No update to receive.

14. Consideration of process of appointment of co-opted members.

Members discussed the process for appointing co-opted members and different voting procedures.

Members **AGREED** the following:

- That the applicants would be voted on each in turn.
- In accordance with Standing Orders a successful candidate required over 50% of the vote.
- That the running order would be decided by drawing the applicants names at random.

Members noted that one application had been received in Welsh and that there would not be enough time to arrange a translation prior to the next Town Council meeting. Members **AGREED** to

contact the applicant and ask if they would be prepared to submit an English language application for consideration.

The Administrative Assistant left the meeting at 3pm and the Deputy Town Clerk took over taking the minutes.

15. Review of lease agreements for Council tenants.

The Clerk updated members that a contract had been issued to the Bowls Club for the use of the facility. The CFS was in the process of preparing similar contracts for those organisations with exclusive use of a facility. It was commented that users should be issued with a “Licence to Occupy” that is reviewed annually. Other regular users who do not have exclusive use of a facility should be issued with a rental agreement. It was proposed by Cllr Michael Theodoulou and seconded by Cllr David Owens that as this matter concerns the Town Council facilities, it should be referred to that committee. **RESOLVED**

Action: Deputy Clerk for Facilities and Assets agenda

16. To consider schedule of accounts.

The Clerk had previously explained why these were not available.

17. Consideration of outstanding invoices.

None.

18. Update on staffing issues.

Nothing to report.

19. Any referred matters from other Committees.

The issue regarding the way forthcoming meetings are held was discussed. Members were informed that the new regulations, which were effective from May 2021, mean that meetings have to be held in a way which enable members of the public/press to attend. Further discussion on this item will take place in the June Town Council meeting.

The Chair informed members that the Town Council had approved Pembrey Memorial Hall expenditure and the Project Manager would also be providing a spec for the heating system.

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

None.