

At a Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on Wednesday 4th June 2014, at the Civic Offices, Wellington Road Community Centre, Rhyl commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Miss S. L. Roberts (Vice-Chair)

Councillors B. Blakeley, Mrs J. Butterfield MBE,
Mrs E. M. Chard, Ms J. Hughes, A. R. James, Mrs P. M. Jones, J. May,
Mrs M. McCarroll, B. Mellor, B. F. Moylan, S. H. Ratcliffe,
A. J. Rutherford and D. Simmons.

R. A. Hughes – Finance Officer
Miss H. J. Windus - Personal Assistant & Secretary

1. APOLOGIES

I. W. Armstrong (indisposed), Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones (family commitment), Mrs W. M. Mullen-James (DCC commitment), P. Prendergast (on holiday), Miss R. Siddall (other commitment), W. N. Tasker (on holiday), Miss C. L. Williams (indisposed) and the Town Clerk, Mr G. J. Nickels (on annual leave)

2. RHYL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME – PROGRESS REPORT

The appointed Champions, Councillors J. May and A. J. Rutherford, referred to their report (circulated with agenda) seeking Members' direction.

The Champions stated that they felt that they were at a disadvantage as they had only been appointed to their positions a month ago and therefore were unable to inform any debate.

The Finance Officer reported that the programme officers had managed to find staffing savings of £3,827 as a result of the Town Council's decision to reduce funding by £5,000 for the 2014/15 programme, but that there was a shortfall of £1,132 still to be found. The programme officers had given the Town Council four options to choose from which would provide the level of savings required.

Some Members felt that the decision should be taken by the programme officers rather than the Town Council. Others felt that as the programme was the Town Council's it was right that the Town Council made the difficult but necessary decision.

RESOLVED that the new Champions to meet with the programme officers to be fully appraised of the programme and the current position and to request a more detailed breakdown of participant statistics for Sportzone.

3. DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL STANDARDS COMMITTEE – TRAINING FOR CHAIRS / VICE-CHAIRS

Further to Minute No.165 of the meeting held on 6th March 2013, the Chair reported receipt of an e-mail from DCC's Head of Legal and Democratic Services

(circulated with agenda) offering the Town Council two places on the above training session.

RESOLVED that Councillor A. R. James be nominated to attend with the other place left open for any Member interested who was not present at tonight's meeting.

4. **DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – EMPTY HOMES PROJECT**

The Chair reported receipt of correspondence from the above project's Empty Homes Officer (circulated with agenda) offering to present to a future meeting of the Town Council.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) *the officer be invited to a future meeting of Council.*
- (ii) *Members' questions to be submitted to the Town Clerk and passed to the Empty Homes Officer prior to the meeting to enable full responses.*

5. **I.T. REPORT**

The Finance Officer circulated his report confirming that he and the Town Council's current IT Contractor, BJS Solutions, had tested the market and presented two options, one from BT and one from a Chester based company, Direct Line Communications, both would result in a £600 saving to the Town Council per annum.

RESOLVED that the Finance Officer is instructed to proceed with the BT package.

FURTHER RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended to enable the Finance Officer to act as a matter of urgency.

6. **CONSULTATION: WELSH GOVERNMENT – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DEMOCRACY) (WALES) ACT 2013 – DRAFT GUIDANCE**

The Chair referred to the Town Clerk's report (circulated with agenda) outlining proposals around 'Access to Information on Community and Town Councils' and they would impact on the Town Council.

RESOLVED that the report be approved.

7. **NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD – DENBIGH**

Further to Minute No.93 of the meeting held on 6th November 2013, the Chair referred to the Town Clerk's report (circulated with agenda) seeking a suitable level of financial contribution towards future National Eisteddfods to be held in Denbighshire.

Members reiterated their disappointment at the lack of Eisteddfod events in Rhyl during last year's festival, particularly when the Town Council had contributed £10,000 specifically focusing on Rhyl events to engage with the town's young people and reaffirm our cultural heritage.

A Member stated that he was only aware of one event held at St. Thomas' Church.

Members agreed that they would be much more proactive in preparing for the next Eisteddfod to be held in Denbighshire.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) *the Town Council to allocate £1,000 per annum (to a maximum of £10,000) to a new general 'Welsh Culture' pot to be used to support and promote any cultural initiative, including the National Eisteddfod.*
- (ii) *Any future contribution to the National Eisteddfod in Denbighshire should not exceed £10,000.*

8. PROGRESS REPORTS

i) Rhyl Town and Area Plan

Councillor A. R. James reported that the High Street refurbishment was underway and that the group had seen some really good artist impressions of how it would eventually look, including fairly mature trees and a complimentary lighting scheme.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to include an item on a future agenda to further discuss taking the lead on a public consultation after the refurbishment works are completed with a view to hearing their feedback and any further requirements / ideas residents may have about the town centre.

ii) Rhyl Going Forward Officers

No reports were submitted.

9. CLWYD PENSION FUND: INVITATION FOR REPRESENTATIVE ON COMMITTEE

The Finance Officer referred to an e-mail received from the Clwyd Pension Fund (circulated with agenda) offering the Town Council one place on the Pension Fund Committee.

Councillors A. R. James and A. J. Rutherford both expressed an interest in the position.

RESOLVED that the Finance Officer to pass all information to both Councillors and for them to decide between themselves who is best suited to the role.

10. MEMBERS' ITEM

(i) Foryd Harbour

Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield MBE sought Members' authority for the Council's Committee Room to be used for a newly established, small group to discuss future matters surrounding the Foryd Harbour now that the work of the Foryd

Harbour Forum was coming to an end. Councillor Butterfield added that the group would meet quarterly and that no refreshments would be required.

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

(ii) Rhyl Botanical Gardens

Councillor A. J. Rutherford sought Members' authority for an urgent presentation to be received from the Café volunteers with regard to recent incidences of anti-social behaviour at the Gardens.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to invite two of the volunteers to the June meeting of Council.

11. MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS

(i) Vacancy in the Bodfor Ward

On the Town Clerk's behalf, the Finance Officer advised that three CVs had been received and that they would be brought to the June Council meeting for Members' consideration.

(ii) Project Management Training

The Finance Officer reported that after spending the best part of a week putting the training session together at Members' request, only one of 12 Councillors had turned up on the day to receive the training. The session went ahead with Councillor Mrs E. M. Chard and would not be re-scheduled. The Finance Officer said that any Councillors wanting to, could take a copy of the paperwork away with them to read through.

Councillor Chard thanked the Finance Officer for a very good training session.

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting for consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, on the grounds of confidentiality.

13. RHYL TOWN COUNCIL'S MAYOR'S GALA AWARDS

In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Finance Officer reported that the Town Clerk would like Members' authority to investigate a change in format of the event to help to increase ticket sales and ultimately revenue and report back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

14. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Finance Officer referred to the one-off request (circulated with agenda) from a local Karate Association for the Town Council to consider assisting towards the

cost of two students representing Wales in the World Championships in Switzerland in September later this year.

The Finance Officer felt the request might fall within the remit of Town Promotion / Civic Pride in the Town Council's Strategic Plan document?

RESOLVED that the Finance Officer to contact the Association to make further enquiries of the two students and report back to the Committee.

[Councillor J. May declared a personal interest in the above item due to being a friend of the applicant and vacated the Chamber taking no further part in discussions or voting thereon]

15. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – PROGRESS REPORT

On behalf of the Chair of the Council's Risk Assessment Sub-Committee, the Finance Officer provided an update on the current position.

Some Members advised that with regard to one of the options being explored, the Sub-Committee had overlooked a key part of the Rhyl Community Association's Constitution.

RESOLVED that the matter be referred back to the Risk Assessment Sub-Committee for full consideration and clarification.

16. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed.

Chair:

Date: