

At the hybrid **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 18th October 2023, commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine (Mayor)

Councillors M. Blackwell, Mrs M. A. Blakeley-Walker, Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, Mrs E. M. Chard, S. Feeney, Mrs. J. Hughes, A.R. James, K. R. Jones, Mrs D. L. King, B. Mellor, Mrs W. M. Mullen-James, Ms R. Roberts, Ms V. Roberts, A. J. Rutherford, D. Simmons, A. Walker and Miss C. L. Williams

Mr G. J. Nickels – Town Clerk

The Mayor's Chaplain, Rev. Helen Gheorghiu Gould, commenced proceedings by leading all present in prayer.

64. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs J. M. Evans and Miss S. L. Roberts, also Miss H. J. Windus – Deputy Town Clerk.

65. DECLARATION IN THE OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR – RHYL CEFNDY WARD

The Town Clerk formally advised the Council that the notice of a vacancy in the Office of Community Councillor for the Rhyl Cefndy Ward had been declared on 12th October 2023 with a closing date for 10 electors to request that an election be held being 1st November 2023.

RESOLVED *that the report was noted.*

66. MINUTES

The minutes of the following meetings of council and committees were submitted for approval as a correct record:

Meeting of Council - 20th September 2023 - Min Nos 53 - 63

Proposed by Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine and seconded by Councillor Miss C. L. Williams and **RESOLVED** *as a correct record.*

Planning Committee - 20th September 2023 - Min. Nos.16 - 18

Proposed by Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine and seconded by Councillor D. Simmons and **RESOLVED** *as a correct record.*

To Confirm or otherwise:

Finance & General - 4th October 2023 - Min. Nos. 31 - 41
Purposes Committee

Proposed by Councillor A. J. Rutherford and seconded by Councillor A. R. James and **RESOLVED** as a correct record and confirmed for action.

67. PRESENTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HOMELESSNESS TEAM

[Councillor Miss C. L. Williams declared her personal interest in the following item due to her involvement with the SARTH system]

Further to min.no.27 of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6th September 2023, the Mayor welcomed to the meeting Ms Ann Lloyd, Head of Service and Mr Nigel Jones, Service Manager, Denbighshire County Council to discuss homelessness within Rhyl.

The officers provided the Council with a comprehensive oversight of the service, stating:

- That over Covid regulations had been relaxed by the Welsh Government requiring Councils to offer emergency housing as a priority.
- That there had been a significant increase in demand during Covid and had subsequently remained static at 160 – 200 households a month.
- That when a person presents themselves as homeless to the authority they needed to establish a local connection to Denbighshire and this was vigorously verified. Where a homeless person could not establish a local connection they were assisted back to their relevant authority. The only exception being where there was a risk, for example, domestic abuse.
- The service concentrated on prevention rather than cure but this depended on people making contact which often didn't happen until they were in crisis.
- That there were numerous reasons why people became homeless and where appropriate the Council would speak to landlords and seek to take over and manage the tenancy through an agreement.
- That currently there were only two rough sleepers in Denbighshire both of whom had declined assistance from the Council and that the most at any one time was seven-eight people.
- As soon as a rough sleeper is identified the Council will despatch a specialist team who would seek to engage with them and identify a path back into accommodation.

In response to members' questions the officers advised:

- In relation to families which had been put into B&B properties and in particular a family housed in a former garage it was advised that although the building had been a former garage it had been renovated to the same standard as the rest of the B&B in question and had been inspected. The renovation having been undertaken prior to the service starting to utilise

the particular B&B and that each B&B had its own designated team of officers attending on a daily basis.

- That there were currently 1,760 people on the SARTH (Single Access Route To Housing) list with 100 in Band 1.
- That in respect of rough sleepers without local connections here in Denbighshire, they would be given paid accommodation but then assisted back to their local area.
- That the majority of emergency B&B accommodation was in Rhyl with some in Denbigh and Llangollen.
- That the location of the accommodation was dependent upon which hotel providers were willing to accommodate homeless people.
- That the forthcoming anticipated cuts to services would need to be carefully managed. If the County Council had its own accommodation available then it would be able to cut the cost, but the main aim remained getting people into their own tenancies and keeping them there.
- Noted that a member had accompanied a DCC Cabinet member to view the Westminster Hotel and that while the accommodation had been unsuitable for the family occupying the room, they had advised that they had been well looked after and had lived there for 10 months.
- That the officers did actively manage who was located in which B&B to avoid potential confrontations.
- That approximately 75% (135) of households were single or couples with the remainder being families.
- Noted a member's concerns that people were unable to access the Tai Teg scheme due to income levels.
- In response to a question relating to how it was determined which accommodation was suitable for housing and which people were suitable for that accommodation, the officers advised that currently there was no standard for emergency accommodation. The Welsh Government had intended to introduce suitable accommodation legislation which would have removed the option to utilise B&Bs, but this had been deferred.
- The officers explained the SARTH process for the benefit of members not familiar with it and emphasised that Homeless Prevention Teams undertake assessments of the specific needs of the client and provide support to both the clients and landlords, which included issues like mental health and substance misuse needs.
- That the service works in conjunction with the Empty Homes Officer.

At the conclusion of the presentation the Mayor thanked the officers for their attendance and the information provided.

68. CONSULTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSALS TO REDUCE DENBIGHSHIRE LIBRARY SERVICE HOURS

[Councillors B. Mellor and Mrs W. M. Mullen-James declared their prejudicial interest in the following item due to holding Cabinet positions on Denbighshire County Council and vacated the chamber during the debate and voting there-on]

The Town Clerk referred to the current consultation relating to a proposed reduction in the opening hours of Rhyl library (copy circulated with agenda), and sought members' instructions as to how to respond.

Members discussed in detail the proposal noting the intention of the County Council to reduce the service across the County and raised the following concerns:

- any reduction in service would also impact on ancillary services provided in conjunction with the library service such as the One Stop Shop.
- the library played an essential role in the community which would not be mitigated by the proposed amended hours.
- while they appreciated the financial difficulties being faced by the County Council, a reduction in Rhyl library hours was not a viable answer and would impact on the most deprived and vulnerable residents in the county.
- Rhyl library was seen as a safe warm hub for individuals and families.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk to prepare a draft response for members' consideration with the Mayor authorised to approve the final response.

69. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor submitted details of events attended by herself and the Deputy Mayor over the past month (copy circulated with agenda).

In particular the Mayor made reference to her attendance on behalf of the Council at the funeral of Councillor Peter Prendergast which had been well attended.

The Mayor also made reference to her attendance at the Rhyl Miniature Railway official naming ceremony at which a new engine had been named.

The Deputy Mayor also advised on her attendance at two events, one at Theatre Twm or' Nant and one at Vale of Clwyd Mind World Health day.

Councillor Mrs D. L. King took the opportunity to express her appreciation to her fellow councillors for their support and assistance since the sad passing of Councillor Prendergast.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

70. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS/ADDITIONS TO APPROVED SUPPLIERS LIST (SCHEDULE B)

Further to min.no.143 of the meeting of Council held on 15th March 2017 and in accordance with the council's adopted financial regulations, the Chair referred to the Town Clerk's submitted schedule B (a list of non-regular payments to be released over the coming month) (circulated with agenda).

Voucher Number	Supplier	Details of Supply	Amount £
1710	Cllr J McAlpine	Mayoral Allowance 23/24 Payment 2 of 3	433.33
1711	Cllr J McAlpine	Senior Allowance 23/24 Payment 2 of 3	166.67
1712	Cllr C Williams	Deputy Mayoral Allowance 23/24 Payment 2 of 3	133.33
1713	Cllr C Williams	Senior Allowance 23/24 Payment 2 of 3	166.67
1714	NMWATC	Lunches for 4 Delegates meeting on 20 October 2023	88.00
1715	Sandra Williams	Translation Services to 30 Sept 2023	316.09
1716	RNLI Rhyl	2 x Tickets for Crew Dinner 21 October 2023	70.00
1717	Sea Cadets Rhyl	2 x Tickets for Mess Dinner 27 October 2023	70.00
1718	Rhyl Fire Station Welfare Committee	Contribution to Bonfire & Fireworks 2023	5,000.00
	Total Schedule B		£6,444.09

RESOLVED that the schedule was approved for payment and signed by two councillors.

71. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AND FORECASTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24

The Town Clerk referred to his and the Finance Officer's joint report (circulated with agenda) showing performance against the budget, which was on-track, but advised that a lot can change over a six-month period.

RESOLVED that the report was received.

72. INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2023 AND FORECASTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24

Further to minute no.23 of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6th September 2023, the Town Clerk referred to his and the Finance Officer’s joint report (circulated with agenda) showing a return of £2,639.61.

RESOLVED that the report was received.

73. APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL GOVERNOR – CHRIST THE WORD

The Town Clerk reported the resignation of Councillor Ms J. McAlpine from the position of the town council’s appointed Additional Community Governor at Christ The Word School, and asked members to consider appointing a replacement.

RESOLVED that Councillor A. Walker was appointed.

74. CHAIRS TRAINING

The Town Clerk advised upon correspondence received from Denbighshire County Council offering training for Chairs and Vice-chairs of the Council and its committees at a cost of £15 per member to be held on the morning of Friday 24th November 2023.

RESOLVED that the invitation was received.

75. MEMBER’S ITEM – PROPOSED CLOSURE OF RHYL COMMUNITY FIRE STATION

Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield advised on the proposed closure of the Rhyl Community Fire Station but asked if it would still proceed following a recent announcement by the North Wales Fire Authority.

Members generally expressed their dissatisfaction that the Rhyl and Deeside fire stations remained at risk of reduced manned hours.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to the North Wales Fire Authority seeking clarification as to the future of the Community Fire Station.

76. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further items of business the Mayor declared the meeting closed.

Mayor:

Date: