

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Finance and Management Committee (remote meeting) held on Wednesday 12th January 2022 at 6.15pm-7.49pm

PRESENT

Councillors: J. Thompson-Hill (Chairman), P. Duffy, S. Frobisher, B. Murray, R. Flynn, A. Tomlin, L. Muraca, A. Sampson, G. Sandilands, T. Jones, K. Jones, P. Penlington.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs L. Fearn – Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer, Mrs L. Hewitt – Committee Support Assistant

APOLOGIES

Councillors:- G. Davies, T. Flynn, G. Percival, M. German, G. Frobisher, A. Frobisher,

132 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors were reminded of need to disclose personal and/or prejudicial interests in tonight's proceedings. Cllr B. Murray declared an interest in the Ffrith Indoor Bowling Centre.

133 PAID ACCOUNTS

Details of paid accounts September 2021 – November 2021 had been circulated with agenda.

Cllr G. Sandilands had previously requested a percentage figure to show the variances on expenditure. Mrs L. Fearn, Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer explained this facility would be available when Prestatyn Town Council had implemented a new electronic accounts package.

RESOLVED That Paid Accounts for September, October and November 2021 be accepted.

134 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Details of financial statements had been circulated with agenda. One member raised concerns about the cost of the Christmas stage. This was discussed by Committee including suggestions for use of stage at future Festive events.

RESOLVED That Financial Statements be accepted.



135 INTERNAL AUDITOR 2021/22 PM 82

Councillor J. Thompson-Hill, Chairman informed Committee that Prestatyn Town Council had had no luck in hiring an Internal Auditor locally and recommended Council should continue to use services of Hacker Young. Albeit an increase of £50. Mrs L. Fearn, Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reported Hacker Young were keen for Council to get an accounts package.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY That Hacker Young remain as internal auditor for Prestatyn Town Council 2021/22.

136 COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT

Prestatyn Town Council Financial Estimates for 2022.23 were displayed on screen and discussed with Cllr J. Thompson-Hill explaining any variations. .

Cllr G. Sandilands enquired if money had been allocated for Queen's Jubilee celebrations. Mrs L. Fearn confirmed that events would hopefully take place on Bastion Fields over the four day period by an "It's A Knockout" organizer David John Billington of KO.

Cllr A. Sampson also revealed he would be applying for a grant to organize a street party on Prestatyn High Street.

Many groups had also expressed interest in the planting of trees to recognize this event.

Cllr A. Tomlin reminded Committee that it was ten years since the dreadful fire in Prestatyn and wondered if anything would be done in remembrance. Cllr P. Penlington informed Committee that family involved would like a remembrance garden, but maybe a tree could be planted somewhere already established e.g. at Pendre Gardens. It was decided the family be approached for discussion by both Cllr A. Tomlin and Cllr P. Penlington.

Cllr G. Sandilands suggested that agenda and papers be sent electronically from next council. Some Councillors expressed a desire for hard copies to continue to be distributed, All agreed that minutes would be sent out electronically, all opted in, unless requested for hard copies by opting out.

The cost of phone and broadband bills were raised. Mrs L. Fearn believes that better packages are available and savings could be made once out of contract in 2023. This will be investigated.

Election costs are covered as monies are allocated over the term of office period.

Gas and electric bills have seen significant increases . A provision has been taken into account for in the forecast.

Staffing costs were also discussed and it was agreed that staffing structures needed attention.

Festive Lighting was discussed as a new contract is up for tender this year. Mrs L. Fearn was hoping for more solar lights in the coming year, consequently resulting in a saving.

The Scala LSA commenced in 2006 for a 26year term.



Project Red Box – the red telephone box and signal box project was discussed. A provision for contribution has been included.

Four options were discussed:

Option 1 – stay the same no increase.

Option 2 – 5% increase in line with inflation

Option 3 – 2% increase

Option 4 – increase to cover all expenditure as not to use reserves

Resolution Option 1 was proposed by Cllr S. Frobisher and seconded by Cllr G. Sandilands that the 2022/23 precept should have a 0% increase and Band D Council Tax was agreed at £63.74. This was carried unanimously and will be taken to Full Council for ratification.

Mrs L. Fearn, Responsible Financial Officer will complete DCC Precept Form on behalf of Prestatyn Town Council and submit on Friday 14th January 2022 to meet DCC deadline.

137 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial Assistance applications had been received from:-

i Marie Curie

No specific amount has been requested. Mrs L. Fearn, Deputy Town Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer will forward a grant application form and a request for statistics relating to the support provided to Prestatyn residents

ii Ffrith Indoor Bowls Centre

RESOLVED That a grant of £90 be awarded. Proposed by Cllr A. Tomlin and seconded by Cllr G. Sandilands.

iii Benefit Advice Shop - request for £3k for 2022/23 an increase of £200. Provision provided in 2022/23 budget

RESOLVED after a full discussion that a grant of £2,000 be awarded for 2022/23. Proposed by Cllr A. Tomlin and seconded by Cllr G. Sandilands. Cllr M. German was not in attendance but wanted his support noted.

138 NORTH AND MID WALES ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Committee discussed renewal of membership of the association.

Cllr G. Sandilands proposed seconded by Cllr A. Tomlin that membership should be renewed. All agreed.



139 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021 – DRAFT STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS

Copies had been distributed to all Councillors with agenda for information. Mrs L. Fearn, Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer highlighted a link that was available to Councillors for the survey.

140 STAFFING SUB COMMITTEE

This item had previously been deferred. Mrs L. Fearn suggested that the staffing sub-committee should be made up of four Councillors who do not have any personal interest with any member of staff as to prevent restrictions with involvement. Cllr A. Tomlin questioned the need to appoint a staffing sub-committee at this time, so near the end of a Municipal Year and with elections in May 2022. Mrs L. Fearn replied it is not needed and suggested that Council use procedures. She informed the Committee that bi-weekly staff meetings were taking place, when possible, during which frank and open discussions were held. Cllr A. Tomlin agreed and proposed to disband Staffing Committee for the time being. Cllr G. Sandilands agreed. Cllr A. Sampson supported and stated it could be reinstated if needed.

RESOLVED All agreed to disband the staffing committee.

141 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was proposed by Cllr G. Sandilands seconded by Cllr B. Murray to exclude public and press during the final item Staffing.

142 STAFFING

Cllr J. Thompson-Hill, Chairman, informed Committee that Mrs J. Seaman, Financial Assistant, had recently retired. He would be liaising with Mrs L. Fearn, Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer on how to move forward in this department. New financial/accounts package would deal with a lot of the financial work required so the new role will reflect this

RESOLVED A letter of thanks be sent to Mrs J. Seaman in recognition of her long service and a collection for a gift will be organized and a time to present this.

The vacant Town Clerk position had recently been advertised with five applications received. Three candidates had been invited for interview, to be held tomorrow. However, two candidates had withdrawn and so interviews for the vacant position had been cancelled. Cllr S. Frobisher suggested that Council need to look seriously at what is needed for the organisation before continuing with the recruitment for a new Town Clerk.

RESOLVED

- 1) That a review of PTC staffing structure would be carried out to take into account the skills needed to deliver an efficient and successful running of the Council.
- 2) That Mrs L. Fearn be thanked for stepping in over the past few weeks and doing a grand job, carrying such a heavy burden

Chairman

