

HOLYWELL TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF TREFFYNNON

Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee held in the Council Chamber, Bank Place Offices, Holywell on Tuesday, 23 June 2015 at 5.15pm.

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PRESENT: Councillor: B. Scragg (Vice-Chairman, presiding – see minute No. A2.).

Councillors: J.M. Johnson (Deputy Mayor – who presided for minute No's. A1. and A2.), E.B. Palmer and P.A. York.

APOLOGIES FOIR ABSENCE were received on behalf of Councillor J. Griffiths and from Councillor P.J. McGarry (Mayor).

IN ATTENDANCE: D.C. Pierce (Clerk).

A1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2015/16

The Clerk advised on the eligibility of Members to be nominated as Chairman, including those Members absent from the meeting where their agreement to being considered had been communicated to the Clerk.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor J. Griffiths be elected Chairman of the Audit Sub-Committee for 2015/16.

A2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2015/16

RESOLVED:

That Councillor B. Scragg be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Audit Sub-Committee for 2015/16.

The Vice-Chairman presided for the remainder of the meeting.

A3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

None.

A4. BANK RECONCILIATION 2014/15 – ANNUAL STATEMENT

Members had before them a copy of the Reconciliation Statement for the financial year 2014/15, circulated with the agenda, together with corresponding information covering the year 2013/14. The Clerk explained the background to the entries. The contents had also been verified on 29 May

2015 by the Council's Internal Auditor as part of the Annual Return requirement. The Finance Committee would be informed accordingly as well.

RESOLVED:

That the Statement, together with the Clerk's report, be received and noted.

A5. AUDIT OF THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15

The Clerk reported on the recommendation/action in respect of the Internal Audit report for the year ended 31 March 2015.

Improvement to the Audit Trail

- All Advertising Income for the Well Inn Festival Booklet 2014 had been duly entered and banked although the audit trail to follow individual invoices through to the cashbook and bank statement could be improved.

The Clerk reported that the recommendation would be implemented for the Festival Booklet in future years, as appropriate.

- Changes to the Annual Return 2015/16

The above would include examining the Council's arrangements for budget setting and monitoring. Monitoring of income and expenditure against the budget should be recorded within the Council's minutes.

The Clerk suggested that the new arrangements could be helped by the obtaining of specific software.

- Guidance Note 2015/16 – The Pensions Regulator

This was an area of potential risk. The Council should ensure it met the requirements of the Pensions Regulator with respect to auto-enrolment, or it could face fines.

The Clerk reported that, under new requirements, every employer with at least one member of staff must automatically enrol those who were eligible into a workplace pension and contribute to it.

He added that he had put his name forward as a primary contact on behalf of the Council, to the Pensions Regulator to co-ordinate the auto-enrolment process. The starting date for the Town Council was 1 October 2016.

If not already done, the Council was recommended to review this risk. The Clerk reported that the situation was already in hand.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Internal Auditor's Report be received and noted.
- (2) That the Clerk's responses on each report on the items covered, as above, be noted and endorsed.
- (3) That the Clerk be commended for his work as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer.

A6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE PROPOSAL

Arising from the changes to the Annual Return 2015/16 in the preceding item, the Clerk suggested that the purchase and installation of a local authority accounts software package would assist in meeting the requirements as well as being time-saving. He circulated an example of the type of software on the market together with the cost of acquisition and for its annual support and maintenance – single user licence.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be supported, in principle, and that the Clerk be authorised to make further enquiries on other systems that may be available locally and, in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee, obtain a system that best meets the Council's requirements within available budget resources.

A7. CHANGE TO WASTE COLLECTION AGREEMENT – BANK PLACE OFFICES, HOLYWELL

The Clerk reported on new arrangements with Wastewater Waste Collection of Prestatyn from April 2015 after the County Council had ended its trade waste collection service in March.

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted and the new arrangements supported.

A8. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded for the following minutes (A9. and A10.) on grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in relation to engagement/terms of service of employees.

A9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER – CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT, POST-CONTRACT PERIOD

The Clerk reported on the review requirements following the end of the Community Engagement Officer's (CEO) fixed-term contract with the Council. The CEO had indicated that he wished to be considered for a continuation in post.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the appointment of Martin George Fearnley to the position of Community Engagement Officer with the Town Council with effect from 18 June 2015 be confirmed in accordance with his existing duties and responsibilities and general terms and conditions, based on 22 hours per week.
- (2) That the CEO's former in-post salary be advanced by one increment (from NJC Scale LC2 point 32 to Scale LC2 point 33, pro rata 22 hours per week) with effect from 1 June 2015, with the next annual increment to point 34 on 1 April 2016, to regularise arrangements with permanent Council staff.

A10. RECRUITMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

The Clerk reported on current staffing arrangements and to the need in the near future to consider the Council's requirements to meet increasing demands on the existing two part-time members of staff.

The Clerk also reported the Mayor's request for consideration to be given to the appointment of a part-time Events Manager (16 hrs a week).

Members agreed that the appointment of additional staff was required to supplement the existing working arrangements whilst at the same time making use of accommodation soon to be made available following the contractual works at No. 14 Bank Place (Council Chamber).

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be requested to report to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on arrangements that would best meet the Council's future staffing requirements.

A11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.20 pm.

.....Chairman