

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 Wednesday 17 January 2018 at 11.00am.

PRESENT: Councillor E.B. Palmer (Chairman).
Councillors: P.A. Johnson, K. Roberts, B. Scragg.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from J.M. Johnson (Mayor) and Councillor P.J. McGarry.

IN ATTENDANCE: J. Baker (Clerk).

A21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – MEMBERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT

None.

A22. BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18

The Clerk summarised the financial position of the Council as at the end of the third quarter 31 December 2017. The accounts and projections follow previous patterns established through the year. Members noted there will be a call on the Council’s reserves to balance the accounts at the end of the financial year. It was noted a number of earmarked donations remained unpaid, and that it was the responsibility of the relevant organisations to submit financial assistance application forms as required for consideration by the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the financial position as at 31 December 2017 be noted and accepted as a true record.

A23. REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Members reviewed the effectiveness of the Council’s internal controls having regard to the statutory Audit requirements. Members considered the various controls in place and sought information from the Clerk to supplement their review. The Clerk also circulated the current Risk Management Schedule.

The review of controls covered:

- Multiple cheque signatories
- Regular bank reconciliations
- Regular review of accounting records
- Recording in minutes of powers for payments
- Minutes accurately recorded, numbered and approved
- Adequate insurance
- Testing of measures preventing fraud.

The Clerk added that he continued to be available to assist any Member of the Council requiring information or clarification on the operation of the Council's financial systems and controls.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, in accordance with the relevant statutory Regulations, the Council's system of internal controls currently in place is considered to be generally adequate and effective for the areas reviewed.
- (2) That Members of the Audit Sub-Committee continue to be encouraged to take the opportunity to scrutinise the monthly accounts/payments which are available in the Clerk's office on the day prior to each meeting of the Council, as well as any other aspect of the Authority's financial arrangements.
- (3) That the Risk Management Schedule dated 9 December 2017, circulated with the agenda, be noted and approved.

A24. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Council's current strategy was circulated for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the Investment Strategy dated 11 January 2018, circulated with the agenda, be noted and approved.

A25. INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members noted the contents of the Interim Audit Report provided by the Council's Internal Auditor. The Clerk provided operational updates on the issues raised. It was noted that the Internal Auditor concluded the Council's

current system of internal controls is adequate and fit for the purpose intended.

RESOLVED:

That the Interim Internal Audit report be noted and the recommendations followed up by the Clerk.

A26. BANK RECONCILIATION

The Clerk referred to the bank reconciliation statement circulated with the agenda. Members noted the position of the Council's main bank accounts for the period ending 31 December 2017.

A27. COUNCIL POLICY REVIEWS

Members considered new and/or revised policies for the following:

- Financial Regulations
- Financial Reserves Policy

The Clerk stated the policies were the first in a series of policies which were to be reviewed and updated. Further updated policies would be brought for consideration to future meetings.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That all policies once approved would be subject to annual review.
- 2) That both policies be recommended for approval by the Finance Committee on 23 January 2018 with an amendment to the Financial Reserves Policy as follows: The maximum value of reserves should be set at 50% of the precept value, rather than 100%.

A28. USE OF HANDHELD DEVICES (TABLETS)

Members considered a report from the Clerk investigating the potential use of handheld devices by Members and staff for Council meetings, transmission of documents and other information. The report outlined the efficiencies in the back office processes which would be realised through the use of this technology.

RESOLVED:

That the purchase and use of tablets be recommended for approval by the Finance Committee on 23 January 2018.

A29. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded for the following minutes, A30 & A31, on grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted relating to financial and personnel information.

A30. COUNCIL STAFF – REVIEW OF WORK PATTERN

Members considered a request from the Community Engagement Officer to work a revised working pattern from 1 April 2018. The particulars of this request were as follows:

During School Term Times:

Tuesday	9.00am – 3.00am
Wednesday	9.00am – 5.30pm (Min. 20 minute lunch/break period)
Thursday	8.30am – 4.40pm (Min. 20 minute lunch/break period)

During School Holidays:

Wed, Thurs & Friday 9.00am – 4.40pm (Min. 20 minute lunch/break period)

Contractual hours in both work patterns continue at 22 hours per week.

RESOLVED:

That the revised working pattern for the Community Engagement Officer is recommended for approval at the next meeting of full Council on 20th February 2018. Clerk to then write to the Community Engagement Officer confirming the new arrangements.

A31. DRAFT BUDGET 2018/19

Members considered preliminary draft budget proposals for 2018/19. These were to be discussed in further detail and considered for approval by the Finance Committee on 23 January 2018.

A32. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12.30pm.

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Chairman