

## HOLYWELL TOWN COUNCIL

### CYNGOR TREF TREFFYNNON

Minutes of the **Meeting of the Finance Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Bank Place Offices, Holywell on Tuesday, 23 January 2018 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor K. Roberts (Deputy Mayor, Chair).

Councillors: M. Brooke, K. Davies, R. Dolphin, P.A. Johnson, E.B. Palmer, M.D. Phelan, B. Scragg, S.E. Wallbanks and P.A. York.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors L.A. Carter, A. Coleman, J.M. Johnson, S. Johnson and P.J. McGarry.

IN ATTENDANCE: J. Baker (Clerk).

#### F9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – MEMBERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT

The following Declarations of Interest were made and the relevant forms completed for the Clerk to action under the statutory requirements.

Minute No.	Name of Councillor	Personal	Prejudicial	Nature of Interest
F11	R. Dolphin	✓		Member of Carmel Bowling Club.
F11	B. Scragg	✓		Delegate to Walkers are Welcome Committee Holywell.

#### F10. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

##### RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded for the following minute, F11, on grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted arising from the supporting financial and other information provided with the applications.

F11. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – 2017/18

Members considered requests received for financial assistance from various organisations together with a schedule of the organisations and events supported by the Council in 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17. The Clerk read out supporting background and financial information provided by each organisation. The Chairman had given permission for the Holywell Walkers are Welcome application to be considered which was not previously circulated with the agenda.

A statement was circulated with details of donations made to date in the current financial year, budget provision for general donations (£5,000) and earmarked donations (£2,850), with remaining provision (£3,575) being available for allocation, and the Council's policy on donations.

RESOLVED:

That, having considered each application on its merits and in accordance with its general policy on applications, the following donations from the budget be made:

Organisation	£
Carmel Bowling Club	200
Holywell Walkers are Welcome	1,000
Total	1,200

F12. BANK RECONCILIATION 2017/18

Members considered the Reconciliation Statements for the period 31 December 2017, circulated with the agenda. The Audit Sub-Committee had been similarly notified.

RESOLVED:

That the Statement be received and noted.

F13. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Members considered the income and expenditure budget report for the third quarter up to 31 December 2017. Members noted the figures reflected the pattern established early on in the year, with a call on the reserves of circa £10,000 likely to balance out this year's budget.

RESOLVED:

That the accounts be received and noted.

#### F14. ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Members considered lists detailing the estimates, probable income and expenditure for 2017/18 and estimated figures for 2018/19. The Clerk identified and explained certain items for Members' information and also answered questions.

The key points to note for this year's budget setting process were:

- The overriding objective in drafting this budget was to ensure income matched up with expenditure without the need to use any of the Council's reserves.
- The budget protects and maintains current financial commitments.
- The reserves had been set at a minimum level of 20% of the proposed precept, in line with the new policy included with the agenda.
- The final expenditure draft budget represents a near standstill position when compared to last year's budget.
- The draft budget takes no account of payment of member allowances, should these be classified as mandatory when the final determination is published. If a mandatory classification is published members could opt out of receiving this allowance if they so wish by writing to the Clerk.
- A base budget review exercise had been undertaken by the Clerk in drafting this budget ensuring that all current commitments are accounted for at the appropriate budget value. It had been necessary to adjust some budgets up or down based on current operational requirements and spending patterns.
- Where applicable inflation had been applied at the rate of 3%, in line with the current level of the Consumer Price Index. Staff salary budgets had been adjusted to take account of revised working hours, pending pay awards, incremental progression and uplifts to pension contributions.
- There was currently no budget provision built in for project costs, for current work being undertaken on for example the railway halt, museum, gateway signs or high street access to traffic. In respect of these projects members had five options:
  - 1) Increase the precept further to allow for a project costs budget.
  - 2) Make savings elsewhere in the budget to accommodate a project costs budget.
  - 3) Seek financial support from the County Council or Welsh Government.
  - 4) Task the Community Engagement Officer to find grant funding options.
  - 5) Borrow money to finance future delivery of the projects.
- Budget provision was included to provide a repair, maintenance and equipment budget for the council offices, including the provision of a new honours board.
- Two other documents were contained within the agenda for Members' attention:

- 1) A letter from Holywell Leisure Centre formally requesting the £20,000 contribution towards the management and maintenance of the leisure centre operations for 2018/19.
- 2) A table showing the current precept level for all Flintshire Town and Community Councils, with other similar towns highlighted.

The following was discussed and were within the budget figures presented:

- The five weeks Summer Playscheme Programme was maintained and funding was agreed for another play area upgrade.
- The situation in respect of the Holywell Leisure Centre and the financial contribution sought from the Town Council in support, which were significant in relation to the Council's budget and its precept-setting was highlighted.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Annual Estimates of Income and Expenditure, as presented, be approved.
- (2) That £18,080 be allocated in respect of summer play schemes and play area improvements within the Holywell community under a partnership/match funding scheme with the County Council.
- (3) That the Council agree to make a further contribution to the Holywell Leisure Centre Group of £20,000, and for this contribution to be paid over three equal instalments in April, August and December. That Tudor Jones is invited to a future council meeting to discuss in detail the Centre's future business planning arrangements.
- (4) That a precept of £233,500 be issued on Flintshire County Council for the financial year 2018/19 (an increase of 11p per week on 2017/18).

F15. UPDATED AND NEW COUNCIL POLICIES

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:

That the above policies be approved and published and will be subject to annual review.

F16. 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 use of handheld devices/tablets be approved subject to budget considerations. That summons to meetings will be made to members electronically once the tablets are in use. A three month parallel running period was agreed before the paper based system is discarded. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

F17. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN – YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2018

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments in respect of the financial year 2017/18 be noted/approved, subject to any changes that may be notified by the Wales Audit Office:

- External (Statutory Auditor) – BDO LLP (Southampton) on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales.
- Internal Auditor – JDH Business Services Ltd, Pantymwyn, Flintshire.

F18. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.00pm.

.....

Chairman