Minutes of a Meeting of the

Finance and General Purposes Committee

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 11th February, 2016 at 6:00 pm

­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor W. D. Elliott BA)

 Councillors: Mrs. Y. G. Southwell (Chairman)

 R. Gray M. J. Norman

 D. R. Sinnett G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

272. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph, and Councillors A. E. Byrne and R. D. Evans. Apologies for absence were not received from Councillor A. H. Miles.

273. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 7TH JANUARY, 2016:

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

 the Finance and General Purposes Committee

 held on 7th January, 2016, be approved as

 a correct record and that they be signed by the

 Chairman.

274. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

1. Mayor’s Engagements:

5th February - Special performance from the Milford Haven

 Junior Town Band at the Pembrokeshire County

 Council Chambers (attended by the Mayoress and

 the Deputy Mayor).

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) declared a personal interest in this matter as he is President of the Milford Haven Junior Town Band.

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) said that he was also present at the special performance, which was the first time that a Band has played in the Council Chamber. The Chairman of the Pembrokeshire County Council announced that evening that he has chosen the Milford Haven Junior Town Band as one of his charities when he abseils down the north tower of County Hall in May and he has guaranteed a minimum donation of £500.

275. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONDAY EVENING’S MEETING OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

The Clerk said that there was only one financial recommendation made at Monday evening’s meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee.

Three quotations have been received for the replacement of all eight of the windows at Cemetery House and both the front and back doors. The lowest quotation is in the sum of £3,560.00.

To fund this £2,500 can be taken from the Building Maintenance Budget with the balance of £1,060 coming from the Roads and Paths budget. Any funds remaining in the Roads and Paths budget can be carried over to the next financial year (anticipated balance £1,940).

Members noted that this work can be funded from this financial year’s budget for the Cemetery.

RESOLVED THAT

(a) the Finance and General Purposes Committee

endorses the Public Works and Planning

Committee’s recommendation that the quotation

from Gordon Thomas Carpentry of Steynton,

Milford Haven, in the sum of £3,560 for the supply

and fix of 8 windows and a front and back door at

Cemetery House be accepted;

(b) in order to meet this cost out of current funds,

 £2,500 is to be taken from the Building Maintenance

 budget with a balance of £1,060 taken from the

 Roads and Paths budget;

(c) any funds remaining in the Roads and Paths budget

 are to be carried over to the financial year 2016-2017.

276. DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) BILL:

 Members discussed correspondence advising that the Minister for Public Services has published for consultation detailed proposals for the reform of local government. This includes consultation on the Welsh Government’s preference for the future “map” of local government in Wales.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) Members are to respond to the questionnaire on an

individual basis if they wish to do so;

 (ii) the Clerk is to send email reminders on Friday,

 12th February to advise Councillors of the Finance

and General Purposes Committee’s recommendation

and to emphasise the deadline for completing the

questionnaire.

277. REVIEW OF MILFORD HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL’S FIDELITY GUARANTEE INSURANCE,

 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND STANDING ORDERS:

At the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 1st November, 2005, Members agreed that consideration should be given every February as to whether this Town Council’s Fidelity Insurance Cover, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders need to be reviewed before the ensuing financial year, so that the Council, as a whole, is satisfied that all risks facing the Council have been identified and safeguards have been put in place to protect against these risks.

1. Whether the Town Council has adequate Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover:

 The Council’s Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover was increased to £190,000 in April, 2013.

 RESOLVED THAT the Milford Haven Town Council

 retains its Fidelity Guarantee Insurance Cover

 at £190,000 for the financial year 2016-2017.

2. Review of the Council’s Financial Regulations:

 Both the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell and the Clerk confirmed that they had not experienced any issues with the Council’s current Financial Regulations.

 RESOLVED THAT the Milford Haven Town

Council’s Financial Regulations be accepted,

with the caveat that they will have to be

reviewed following any changes to Standing

Orders.

3. Review of the Council’s Standing Orders:

 The Council’s Standing Orders were last amended by the Standing Orders Sub-

 Committee on 11th March, 2014. The Standing Orders Sub-Committee will be meeting shortly to discuss the Standing Orders.

278. ONE VOICE WALES:

1. Membership of One Voice Wales for 2016-2017:

Members gave consideration to a letter from Mr. L. Cadwallader, the Chief Executive of One Voice Wales in which he invited this Council to renew its membership of One Voice Wales from April 2016.

In his letter Mr. Cadwallader summarised the current and future developments made by One Voice Wales.

A Member drew attention to a paragraph in Mr. Cadwallader’s letter in which he referred to the National Training Advisory Group, which is chaired by One Voice Wales, in which One Voice Wales has continued to refine, develop and extend its training provision to the community and town council sector including a successful bid to Welsh Government for support to update and improve the content of its training materials.

The Member said that as £1,000 has been set aside in the next financial year’s precept for Councillor and Staff Training, perhaps there is an opportunity for the Town Council to be more engaged in any available training. Furthermore, members of One Voice Wales are offered a reduction in the training cost.

The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted One Voice Wales after January’s precept meeting and was awaiting information regarding what training is available for the financial year 2016-2017.

 RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) the Finance and General Purposes Committee

 recommends that the Milford Haven Town Council

 renews its membership of One Voice Wales;

 (ii) One Voice Wales is to be asked to give a

 presentation at a Full Council Meeting.

(b) Minutes of the Meeting of the Pembrokeshire Area Committee held at County Hall, Haverfordwest on Tuesday, 29th September, 2015:

Members discussed the Minutes of the Pembrokeshire Area Committee held at County Hall, Haverfordwest on 29th September, 2015.

The Clerk was asked for the names of the Council’s Representatives on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee to which she replied Councillors A. E. Byrne and M. J. Norman.

Councillor Norman was asked how many meetings he had attended since his appointment and he responded that due to his other commitments, he had been unable to attend any. He believed that Councillor A. E. Byrne had attended one meeting.

A Member said that he believes that this Council needs to replace its representatives on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee, as (not specifically on this Committee but generally with representation on outside bodies) there has been a tendency for either no one to want to put their hand up and then for someone to reluctantly put their hand up, or for someone really keen to put their up and still not attend the meetings.

The Member referred to the Agenda item “Pembrokeshire County Council Town and Community Council Liaison Forum” which was discussed at the last meeting of the Pembrokeshire Area Committee when “it was agreed that discussions would be necessary with the County Council, as One Voice Wales had already agreed to the model charter approach developed by the Welsh Government (subject to an appropriate action plan being drawn up)”. This, he considered, was an important issue that had been discussed by this Council and the Pembrokeshire County Council. He believed that this Council needs to be represented by a Councillor who can attend these meetings.

The Chairman asked for Councillor Norman’s views and he replied that he would be more than happy for another Councillor to be this Council’s representative on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee of One Voice Wales. Councillor Norman said that he, and he believed Councillor A. E. Byrne, put up their hands to represent this Council on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee of One Voice Wales because there was no other interest in the Council Chamber at the time.

Members agreed that there should be four Councillors representing this Council on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee of One Voice Wales, so that with a pool of Councillors available, one Member would be able to attend the meetings.

RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Pembrokeshire

 Area Committee held on 28th September, 2015,

 be received;

(ii) in order to guarantee attendance at the

Pembrokeshire Area Committee, the Finance

and General Purposes Committee recommends

that four Councillors are appointed to represent

this Council on the Pembrokeshire Area Committee

of One Voice Wales;

(iii) Two Members are to be appointed from the

 Public Works and Planning Committee and two

 Members from the Finance and General

Purposes Committee.

(c) Minutes of the Meeting of the Larger Councils Committee held on the 14th

 October, 2015 at the Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells:

Members discussed the Minutes of the Meeting of the Larger Councils Committee held on 14th October, 2015.

The Clerk was asked who was invited to attend these meetings, and she replied either the Mayor or the Clerk.

A Member referred to an item in the Minutes in which a discussion was held regarding “the role of community and town councils was considered to be essential in providing services and facilities for use by older people. An example was given of the Raglan Care Scheme. There was support given to Councils investing in schemes to enhance the health of older people”.

The Member considered that this is an important issue in which the Town Council should be engaged.

It was noted that there was also a discussion at that meeting over attendance under Section 4. Future Management of the Committee’s Business:

“…although attendance levels had increased there remained around 70% of eligible councils who failed to send a representative to meetings. For the future, larger councils were expected to fulfil a much larger role and as a result their knowledge of developments affecting their roles was more important than ever.”

The following was also noted:

“The Chair indicated that he was considering the possibility of meeting larger councils in regional settings with a view to encouraging greater participation.”

“A questionnaire is to be issued to larger councils to ascertain why some were not attending meetings and in particular asking for reasons for non-attendance and how might meeting arrangements have greater appeal.”

“Need to reduce number of agenda items.”

Members considered that it was counterproductive to have a low number of agenda items as representatives will be deterred from travelling a long distance for a limited number of items.

 RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Larger

 Councils Committee held on 14th October,

 2015, be received;

 (ii) if the Mayor is unable to attend the next

 meeting of the Larger Councils Committee

 which will be held on 17th February, the

 Clerk is to give apologies.

 (iii) the Milford Haven Town Council responds

to the questionnaire with the following

comments:

(A) the Milford Haven Town Council offers to

 host a Larger Councils Committee meeting;

(B) the meetings need to reflect the distance that Members need to travel to meetings and the

 agendas need to be substantive enough to

 ensure that people are interested enough to travel.

(c) Minutes of the Meeting of the National Executive Committee held on 4th December 2015:

 Members discussed the Minutes of the National Executive Committee held on 4th December, 2015.

 Members noted that under Agenda item 4. Local Government (Wales) Bill 2015 the following was raised:

\* The next community council elections in 2017 would be linked with a six year period of office for Councillors.

\* Principal Councils are to identify mandatory training for community and town councillors and then provide the relevant training.

\* It is proposed that local councils should provide opportunities for members of the public to speak at meetings.

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the National

 Executive Committee held on 4th December,

 2015, be received.

278. STATEMENT OF INCOME:

 RESOLVED THAT the Statement of Income

 for the 3rd quarter of the financial year

2015-2016 be received.

279. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE:

 RESOLVED THAT the Summary of Expenditure

 for the 3rd quarter of the financial year

2015-2016 be received.

280. SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS:

 RESOLVED THAT the Schedule of Accounts,

 as presented by the Clerk for the month of

 January, 2016, in the sum of £16,759.76

be accepted and approved for payment.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_