Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 12th November, 2015 at 6:00 pm

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PRESENT

Councillor W. D. Elliott BA (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: Mrs. Y. G. Southwell (Chairman) A. E. Byrne

R. D. Evans R. Gray

A. H. Miles D. R. Sinnett

G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

188. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph, and Councillor M. J. Norman.

189. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8TH OCTOBER, 2015:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Finance and General Purposes Committee held

on 8th October, 2015, be approved as a correct

record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

190. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

Members were advised of the following engagements undertaken since the 28th October, 2015:

1st November - Dedication of the Cross Service at the Memorial Gardens.

4th November - Lunch at Meads School as part of National School Meals

Day.

4th November - Opening of garden at St. Francis RC School.

5th November - Presented Town Council cheque to Milford Youth Matters.

5th November - Milford Haven Round Table Firework Display on Milford Marina.

8th November (am)- Annual Service of Remembrance at The Cenotaph,

Hamilton Terrace.

8th November (pm)- Neyland’s Annual Service of Remembrance (also attended

by Deputy Mayor).

11th November - Two Minute Silence of Remembrance in Charles Street

12th November - Dragon LNG “This is Me” Project (also attended by

Immediate Past Mayor).

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

The Clerk advised that at Monday evening’s Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee, it was agreed that the Cemetery fees for the financial year 2016-2017 should be increased by no more than 10%, with the exception of the fees for headstones and additional inscriptions which would remain unchanged.

Members’ attention was drawn to the Statement of Income and Summary of Expenditure which appear later on this Agenda and show the shortfall of approximately £4,000 between the income and expenditure at the Cemetery for the first six months of this financial year.

RESOLVED THAT the Finance and General Purposes

Committee supports the Cemetery Fees Sub-Committee

and recommends that the Cemetery fees be increased

by 20% for the next financial year, with the exception

of headstones and 1st inscriptions, which remain

unchanged.

Councillor A. E. Byrne said that he reserved the right to speak on this issue at Full Council.

192. REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE FACEBOOK WORKING GROUP HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER, 2015:

Members discussed the Report of the Meeting of the Facebook Working Group held on 5th October, 2015.

(a) Minute No. 7 – Discussion on Facebook Page for the Milford Haven Town Council:

A Member said that he looked at the Council’s Facebook page regularly and considered that it was working very well and recommended that this Group be expanded to review the Council’s website. He congratulated all those involved in the Facebook Working Group.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the word “after” be amended to “at” on the first

line of the first paragraph;

(ii) the Facebook Working Group be expanded to

review the Council’s website.

193. RENT REVIEW FOR THE MILFORD HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES AT THE TOWN

HALL:

Members discussed a letter from Mr. K. Leighfield, Landlord and Tenant Surveyor, Pembrokeshire County Council.

Mr. Leighfield wrote that the provisions of the lease recognised the use of one of the rooms on the 1st floor by the Registrar and afforded the Town Council a reduction in rent whilst this use continued. The Registrar no longer has use of the Committee Room, although the Coroner and others use the room on an ad hoc basis.

Under the provisions of the lease the Town Council is not charged any rent for the Council Chamber which is meant to be available for permitted use by others. When the Town Council allows others to use the Chamber they can make a charge for its usage but must keep proper records in accordance with the lease. Where the income from such lettings exceeds £2,000 per annum the excess is to be shared equally between the Town and County Council.

Mr. Leighfield explained that the concession in the lease for the use of a room on the 1st Floor by the Registrar no longer applies and it is the Council Chamber that should be made available for permitted use by others (with a charge where appropriate).

The Pembrokeshire County Council has given consideration to the usage of the Committee Room since January 2014 which reveals that between 21 – 23% of the time the room was used by others. The Pembrokeshire County Council is prepared to offer a reduction of £500 per annum in the rental for 2015 - 2016 to provide the Town Council with sufficient time to put in place whatever arrangements Members think are appropriate in the future, in accordance with the provisions of the lease.

The Chairman advised that the Pembrokeshire County Council has increased the Town Council’s rent from £6,500 to £11,000 per annum from this financial year for the remaining term of the lease. Taking into account the £500 reduction offered by the Pembrokeshire County Council, the rent payable this year will be £10,500.

The County Council has offered an incremental rental increase over the remaining period of the lease. It would be possible to pay the same amount in total but the payments could be staggered so they start off lower and increase over the 7 year period.

A Member considered it was important to be consistent and not have a staggered increase, but pay the £4,000 additional rent increase this year, and pay a total of £11,000 per annum in rental charges for the remainder of the lease.

Members discussed the possibility of charging outside bodies for the use of the Committee Room and the Council Chamber. They agreed that it was important to implement a charging policy for the Committee Room and the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Finance and General Purposes Committee

recommends that the Town Council does not

accept the offer of a staggered rent increase but

pays the additional £4,000 rent increase this

financial year and £11,000 per annum in rental

charges for the remainder of the lease;

(ii) the £4,000 is to be taken from this Council’s

Reserves;

(iii) a sub group composed of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor,

and the Chairmen of the two Standing Committees

be formed to look at a charging tariff for the

Committee Room and Council Chamber.

194. DEVELOP TOWN CENTRE WIFI:

Members discussed an email from Ms. S. Henehan, Community Safety, Poverty and Regeneration Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which she advised that Pembrokeshire County Council has recently appointed Antur Teifi (Telemat) to develop and deliver free ‘high street’ WiFi in 10 key Pembrokeshire towns, comprising Tenby,

Haverfordwest, Milford Haven, Pembroke, Pembroke Dock, Saundersfoot, Fishguard and Goodwick, Narberth, Newport and St. Davids.

A briefing has been arranged in County Hall on 24th November with Antur Teifi (Telemat) to discuss the next steps.

RESOLVED THAT:-

(i) if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are unavailable,

Councillor D. R. Sinnett will attend this Meeting

on behalf of the Milford Haven Town Council;

(ii) Councillor Sinnett will update Members at Full

Council.

195. CHRISTMAS TOGETHER 2015:

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) declared a personal interest in this issue as it is his creation.

Councillors R. D. Evans and R. Gray declared personal interests in this issue as they are volunteering at the event.

Members discussed a letter from Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) in which he advised that over the last three years Christmas Together has been hugely successful and was taking place again this year at the Pill Social Centre.

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) asked Members if they knew of someone or a number of people who would benefit from and like to attend the event to contact him via email, telephone or post providing their name(s) and contact details at the latest by 8th December, 2015.

RESOLVED THAT the letter be received.

196. BT TALK TIME SOLO 1 GB PACKAGE:

An email was received from BT Business giving information regarding the BT Talk Time Solo 1GB Package which costs £20 per month plus VAT.

RESOLVED THAT the Town Council does not

subscribe to the BT Talk Time Solo 1GB Package.

197. DRAFT CHARTER BETWEEN PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS:

Members discussed a letter and supporting documentation from the Corporate Planning Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which he sought the views on the draft of a Charter between the Pembrokeshire County Council and the Community and Town Councils in Pembrokeshire.

The Clerk said that this had been discussed at Monday evening’s Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee when it was agreed that Members could complete the form on an individual basis if they wish to do so.

RESOLVED THAT the Finance and General Purposes

Committee endorses the Public Works and Planning

Committee’s recommendation and the questionnaire

is to be completed on an individual basis, if Members

wish to do so.

198. DRAFT MINUTES OF ONE VOICE WALES’ LARGER COUNCILS’ COMMITTEE:

Members gave consideration to the draft Minutes of One Voice Wales’ Larger Councils’ Committee.

Councillor A. E. Byrne, one of the Council’s representatives on the local Pembrokeshire Area Committee, said that he attends the local Meeting but not the Larger Councils’ Committee which is held at Builth Wells.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the draft Minutes of the One Voice Wales Larger Councils’

Committee be received;

(ii) the Clerk is to ensure that this Council offers regular

apologies to the invitations to attend the Meetings of the

Larger Councils.

199. STATEMENT OF INCOME:

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the statement of income for the second quarter of the

financial year 2015-2016 be received;

(ii) Members’ attention is drawn to the figure of £23,476,

which is the total of the income for burial fees

for the first six months of this financial year.

200. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE:

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Summary of Expenditure for the second quarter of the

financial year 2015-2016 be received;

(ii) Members’ attention is drawn to the figure of £27.431.37,

which is the total of the expenditure at the Cemetery

for the first six months of this financial year.

201. APPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS DONATIONS 2015:

The Chairman advised that an additional application from the Salvation Army for a Christmas donation had been received and asked whether Members wished to consider this application.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the application from the Salvation Army be considered at

this evening’s Meeting;

(ii) as the closing date for applications was 30th October,

no other applications for donations will be considered

after this evening’s Meeting and the total £1,400 budget

provision is to be awarded this evening;

(iii) the following donations be made in respect of the

applications for Christmas Donations:

(a) Charles Street Traders (Facebook Group) Regret no donation.

(b) Hakin Old Age Pensioners - £125

(c) Haven Over 60s Club - £125

(d) National Federation of Retirement

Pensioners Association - £125

(e) RVS Darby and Joan Club - £125

(d) Milford Haven Youth Council - £200

(e) Salvation Army - £300

(the Salvation Army is to be asked to provide

proof that the donation has been utilised for the

specific project which will benefit the people

of Milford Haven)

(f) Pembrokeshire Action to Combat Hardship (PATCH)

A Member suggested that rather than awarding PATCH a financial donation, Members could contact PATCH to ask what is needed so that goods can be purchased up to an agreed amount, presented to PATCH, and featured on the Council’s Facebook page.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Clerk consults One Voice Wales

before Full Council as to whether the Council

has the powers to do this;

(ii) the Mayor, Chairman of the Finance and

General Purposes Committee, and Councillor

R. Gray are to contact PATCH to ask what is

needed, and then to purchase, up to a limit

of £400, the requested goods from local shops

which will be presented to PATCH and featured

on the Council’s Facebook page.

202. SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS:

RESOLVED THAT the Schedule of Accounts as

presented by the Clerk for the month of

October, 2015, in the sum of £34,678.55

be accepted and approved for payment.

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