

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Finance and Efficiency Committee Meeting

Monday 9th February 2015

Present: Mayor Cllr Andrew Phillips, Cllrs David Owens, Mrs Shirley Matthews.

Officers: Melanie Carroll-Cliffe (Town Clerk), Alan Howells (RFO)

(Room 1, Memorial Institute, Burry Port 9.15am – 10.40am)

1. Personal Matters

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Pat Jones, Mrs Mary Wenman and Stephen James.

2. To receive Members declarations of interest

Members confirmed their usual declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12th January 2015.

The minutes of the meeting of 12th January 2015 were approved as a true record.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes.

P3 (7) Draft Budget 2015/16

The RFO noted that since the last meeting a revised figure for the tax base had been received from the County Council. It was therefore agreed that additional funding would be funded from a further reduction in the Local election reserve.

Cllr David Owens queried whether the budget should be sufficient for entering the Wales in Bloom and Britain in Bloom competitions. Cllr Shirley Matthews advised that following the attendance at the RHS Finalists' seminar, it appeared that it should not cost more than last year.

The Clerk noted that the TSO will be taking a report to the next Regeneration and Leisure Committee meeting on ideas for the competition. Involvement of local organisations would be needed for the competition, and it is intended that donations/sponsorship be sought.

P 3 (10.1) Trostre Boxing Club

Cllr David Owens noted comments from several members of the public on the running of the bar for this event.

The Clerk noted that this had been discussed at the last Regeneration Committee and its proposal (for putting the management of the bar for future events out to tender) would be going to the next Town Council meeting for consideration.

5. Outstanding Invoices

The RFO advised that some of the invoices had been paid since the agenda had been issued. He therefore suggested that it might be preferable for outstanding invoices to be reported directly at the meeting in order to provide more up to date information.

Cllr Shirley Mathews queried when the Cylch Meithrin would be finishing in Pembrey Memorial Hall. The Clerk noted that she had been advised that they would be leaving at the end of March. The Clerk also advised of a request from that organisation, which had been discussed at the Regeneration and Leisure Committee meeting, to hold fundraising events at Pembrey Memorial Hall once a month on a Sunday. Following consideration by the Regeneration and Leisure Committee, it was **RESOLVED** not to approve this request.

6. **Budget monitoring**

The RFO advised that up to the end of December 2014, income and expenditure should be around 75%.

The RFO provided comments and explanations on each budget heading as follows:

Income

Overall income year to date is within budget, with some annual payments received already. Budget heads showing under budget should improve as the year progresses. Payment is still awaited for the Footpath Grant.

Expenditure

Employees Costs - On budget.

Administrative Costs - On budget, subject to timing issues on insurance and telephone payments. The Payroll SLA will be paid before year end.

Civic expenditure - On budget, with some costs of the Civic Ceremony and the Cawl Cennin to come through in future months.

Cemetery/footpaths – Currently under budget, as footway lighting had not been paid at the end of December. The RFO noted that the 2014/2015 charge would be within the allocated budget. Overall, the budget heading could be over budget by the end of the year. The RFO and TSO will review maintenance, equipment and vehicle expenditure to determine if a virement is required and report back to a future meeting.

Hall and Institute – Currently, most budget headings are within budget, but electricity costs need reviewing. The RFO noted that the Council is tied in to its existing utilities contract until July/August 2015. Again, the RFO and TSO will review electricity costs to determine if a virement is required and report back to a future meeting.

Hall and Institute Refurbishments – As reported previously, the RFO noted that the Town Council and Grant funded budgets had been split as requested previously. The total expenditure to date is around £25,000. The Clerk and TSO are currently reviewing expenditure on grant funded work in order to claim the grant monies this financial year.

Copperworks - On budget, following virements.

Former Pembrey School - On budget. Cllr Shirley Matthews raised queries regarding damp in the Nursery area and the status of the lease for the building.

The Clerk reported that the County Council is currently disputing the liability for the dampness remedial works. She also noted that to date, no steps have been taken by the County Council to negotiate terms for a new lease.

Cllr Shirley Matthews proposed that she and Cllr Hugh Shepardson meet with the Clerk and TSO to discuss these issues, prior to a meeting being arranged with officers of the County Council.

Cllr David Owens also noted that the school had experienced damp problems in the past and that he would contact them on this.

Pembrey Memorial Hall - On budget.

Special Projects – Overall within budget, with many budget headings not yet spent.

Net operational expenditure is just over 69% and is therefore on budget for year to date.

7. Consideration of new format for quarterly review of risk assessment.

The RFO referred to the new format of the quarterly review of the risk assessment, as requested previously by the Committee. The new format gives a risk scoring before and after control measures. The new format was **APPROVED**. It was agreed that the Clerk, TSO and RFO provide scores for each risk for the next review. Cllr David Owens queried about the risk of having to cover staff absences and suggested that this could be considered further by the Civic Governance and Personnel Committee.

8. Consideration of the purchase of a new Welsh flag (referral from Regeneration Committee meeting of 15th January 2015).

The Clerk referred to a referral from the last Regeneration and Leisure Committee meeting for a new flag for the Institute, due to the current flag's poor condition. The Committee **APPROVED** the purchase of a new flag from the General Civic Expenditure budget.

9. Consideration of the new £9 million programme launched by the Big Lottery Fund (referred from the Town Council meeting of 21st January 2015).

The Clerk referred to a referral from the last Town Council meeting for consideration of the launch of the latest Big Lottery Fund programme.

It was discussed that Cllr Michael Theodoulou may be able to assist in relation to consideration of this matter. It was therefore **APPROVED** that if possible, the Clerk, the Mayor, Cllr Andrew Phillips and Cllr David Owens meet with Cllr Michael Theodoulou.

10. Consideration of applications for financial donations/grants.

Burry Port Senior Citizens Club

An application was considered for a community grant in relation to costs for entertainments and social events.

This was approved, with a grant awarded of £100.

Jerusalem Chapel

An application was considered for a community grant in relation to costs for two emergency doors at their hall.

Following discussion on this the application was refused, on the basis that assistance is not normally provided for maintenance/repairs.

Cymdeithas Cymrodion

An application was considered for a local organisation grant in relation to costs for hall hire and speaker costs in promoting the Welsh language.

This was approved, with a grant awarded of £100.

Burry Port Male Choir Ladies Association

An application was considered for a community grant in relation to hall fees for a fundraising event.

As the event is later in the year, this application was deferred to May's round of grant applications.

Burry Port Town Band

An application was considered for a local organisation grant in relation to costs for hall hire for the Youth Solo and Ensemble Brass and Percussion Day.

This was approved, with a grant awarded of £200.

Relate

The Clerk also referred to correspondence received from Relate, seeking a financial contribution towards their work.

Following discussion on this, it was agreed that the Clerk write back to the organisation to request further information on activities related to the Pembrey and Burry Port area.

11. To consider any referred matters from other Committees.

The Clerk reported that there were two referrals from the Regeneration and Leisure Committee.

11.1 Horse Chestnut trees

In commemoration of Anne Frank, it was proposed that horse chestnut trees are purchased for presentation to each of the schools in the area. Following discussion, it was **AGREED** in principle, subject to approval by each school.

11.2 Christmas Lighting – reimbursement of electricity for local businesses.

As had been agreed in previous years, it was recommended that a payment be made to relevant local businesses that had provided electricity for the Christmas lighting decorations.

It was **AGREED** that a payment of £25 be approved for each business who participated in the Christmas lighting scheme.

12. Any other relevant business.

It was raised that the outside lighting at Pembrey Memorial Hall appears to be on continually. The Clerk agreed to discuss this with the TSO, including the potential cost of installing new security lighting, and to report back.