

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Finance and Efficiency Committee Meeting

Monday 9th March 2015

Present: Mayor Cllr Andrew Phillips, Cllrs David Owens, Mrs Shirley Matthews and Michael Theodoulou (substitute for Cllr Stephen James).

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

(Former OAP Hall, Memorial Institute, Burry Port 11.00am – 12.05pm)

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 9th February 2015.

The minutes of the meeting of 9th February 2015 were approved as a true record.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes.

P3 (6) Budget Monitoring - Former Pembrey School

Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews noted that she and County Councillor Hugh Shepardson had met with the Clerk and TSO to discuss these issues ahead of a meeting with CCC to resolve these issues. The Clerk had emailed Mr Jonathan Fearn and was awaiting a response regarding a proposed meeting. Cllr Matthews had also chased up these issues with Jonathan Fearn, but had not had a response yet. She will pursue further through the Democratic Services system to arrange a meeting.

P3 (9) New £9million programme launched by the Big Lottery Fund

Members were updated that the Clerk and Cllr David Owens had met with Cllr Michael Theodoulou to discuss this. However, there would be no funding available to the Town Council.

5. Outstanding Invoices

The RFO advised that some of the invoices had been paid since the agenda had been issued, notably the Cylch Meithrin in Burry Port.

The RFO reported that he had been in contact with the Cylch Meithrin in Pembrey to remind them of their outstanding debt.

Members also requested details of the outstanding balance for the Youth Theatre at the next meeting.

The Clerk added that she had chased up Pembrey Gardening Association regarding their long outstanding invoice.

6. **Budget monitoring and recommended virements.**

The RFO advised that up to the end of January 2015, income and expenditure should be around 83%.

The RFO noted that a review of all expenditure heads had been undertaken with the TSO and a number of recommendations for virements were presented.

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 for the Cawl Cennin event will come through before year end.

Cemetery/footpaths – Currently under budget, as footway lighting had not been paid at the end of January. The RFO again noted that the 14/15 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 have reviewed maintenance, equipment and vehicle expenditure and recommended virements were included within the virements proposals.

Hall and Institute – Currently, most budget headings are within budget, but electricity would be above budget. This was in line with the previous year, but the budget had been underestimated. A recommended virement was included within the virement proposals.

Cllr. David Owens recommended that the TSO look at proposals for using LED and energy savings lighting in the future.

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 Clerk and TSO are currently reviewing expenditure on grant funded work in order to ensure that grant monies are fully utilised.

Copperworks - On budget, subject to virements included within the virements proposals.

Former Pembrey School - On budget, subject to virements included within the virements proposals.

Pembrey Memorial Hall - On budget.

Special Projects – On budget, subject to virements included within the virements proposals.

Net operational expenditure is just over 75% and is therefore on budget for year to date.

Following discussion on the Budget Monitoring report, the RFO presented proposals for budget virements following a review of expenditure to date, as noted below:

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Proposed Budget Virements

	£
<u>Employee costs</u>	
Employee	-4000
Recruitment Costs	-750
<u>Administration</u>	
Marketing and Promotion	-1000
<u>Cemetery</u>	
Maintenance & Repairs	700
Electricity	600
	0
<u>Hall & Institute</u>	
Electricity	3020
<u>Former Pembrey School</u>	
Lease	-3000
Maintenance & Repairs	3000
<u>Pembrey Memorial Hall</u>	
Cleaning Materials	-1000
<u>Special</u>	
Floral Displays	3300
MUGA	1630
Development Budget	-2500
	<u>0</u>

Following discussion it was **AGREED** that the proposed virements be **RECOMMENDED** to the Town Council for approval.

7. Consideration of the appointment of an internal auditor.

The RFO noted that the agenda item should read “internal” not “external” auditor.

He referred to a report which details the scope for the Council’s annual internal audit review and the terms of reference and appointment of the internal auditor. The Council had employed the services of an auditor, Mr Lyn Llewellyn, for the last few years.

It was queried if this arrangement should continue for this financial year (as Mr Llewellyn has recently taken up the post of a neighbouring Town Council) or whether the RFO contact One Voice Wales or a local accountancy practice to ascertain the cost of undertaking this work.

Following discussion, it was **APPROVED** that the RFO make enquiries to find out the cost of this work being undertaken by an alternative individual/company.

8. **Consideration of a request for assistance from Friends of Court Farm.**

The Clerk referred to a request from the “Friends of Court Farm” for a financial contribution towards their development of the site.

The Committee discussed the benefits to the community of the site for educational visits and whether the project would be best funded via grant requests to the County Council.

Following discussion it was **APPROVED** that a donation be awarded of £100.

9. **Further consideration of the purchase of additional microphones for Burry Port Memorial Hall.**

The Clerk referred to discussions at a previous Finance Committee meeting for consideration of quotes for alternative microphone systems.

Quotes had now been received for free-standing microphones and stands, head microphones and ceiling microphones and the Clerk provided details of prices for each option.

Following discussion, it was **APPROVED** that there be a budget of up to £1,000 from General Reserves to obtain additional microphones for the Memorial Hall, as required.

10. **To consider any referred matters from the other Committees.**

The Clerk reported that there were a number of referrals from the recent Regeneration and Leisure Committee meeting.

10.1 Heritage Trail bid.

The Clerk referred to correspondence from the Heritage Trail group which has been considered by the Regeneration and Leisure Committee. The group is preparing an initial £100,000 bid to the Lottery Fund for a grant to progress the project. The proposed funding would be 90% from the grant and 10% from other match funding and sponsorship. The Group had requested that the Town Council support their grant bid.

Following discussion, it was noted that the bid needs to be a community led bid, not a Town Council led bid. However, it was **APPROVED** that the Committee **RECOMMEND** to the Town Council that as this is a long term bid, which would benefit the area of Pembrey and Burry Port, it would support match funding, if the bid was successful, up to £10k. This would be subject to any other match funding or sponsorship contributions from other organisations and it would not commit the Town Council to any ongoing maintenance costs of the project.

10.2 Marketing

The Clerk referred to discussions with CCTA on joining the Carmarthenshire Tourism Association in order to boost marketing opportunities for the area and the Council’s facilities. The membership fee is no more than £100 per annum.

Following discussion, it was **APPROVED** that expenditure of £100 be approved from the Marketing and Promotions budget to subscribe as a member of the Carmarthenshire Tourism Association

10.3 Tourism Signage

The Clerk referred to discussions held with the County Council to provide additional signage on the town entrances to Pembrey and Burry Port to publicise the success in winning the Wales in Bloom competition last year and the entry into the Britain in Bloom competition this year. Signage would be placed below the existing signage. Authorisation was requested for expenditure up to £1,000 for this.

Following discussion, expenditure up to £1,000 was **APPROVED**.

10.4 Pembrey Memorial Hall security lighting

The Clerk referred to a referral for consideration of the installation of security sensor lighting at Pembrey Memorial Hall. A quote had been obtained of £640.

Following discussion, it was **APPROVED** that this expenditure be incurred.

10.5 Copperworks site

The Clerk advised that following discussions with a Planning Officer at Carmarthenshire County Council it had been confirmed that the Copperworks site was now not designated within a Flood Plain area. Accordingly, a planning application could be submitted and this was being recommended by the Regeneration and Leisure Committee.

The TSO has therefore obtained a quote from a local Architect for the preparation of documentation to submit an application for outline planning permission for the site for a housing development, of which the Clerk provided details.

Following discussion, it was **APPROVED** that expenditure on the preparation of documentation to submit outline planning permission for the site for a housing development be **RECOMMENDED** to the Town Council for approval.

10.6 Burry Port Institute fire alarm system

The Clerk referred to a recommendation from the Fire Officer that the fire alarm system be upgraded for the Institute. The TSO has obtained quotes for this work.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that the lowest quote be approved and that the expenditure is **RECOMMENDED** to the Town Council for approval.