

(PUBLIC) Minutes of Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Finance Governance and Personnel Committee Meeting

Monday 11th February 2019

Present: Cllrs Mrs Linda Edwards, Peter Freeman, John Hedley Jones, Mike Theodoulou (substitute for David Owens) and Bob Walpole

Officers: Alan Howells (RFO), Shan Loudon (Temporary Assistant Town Clerk)

(Burry Port Institute, Burry Port 6.30pm– 8.50pm)

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs David Owens and Hugh Shepardson.

2. To receive members' declarations of interest

Cllr Michael Theodoulou declared an interest in item no 9, appointment of internal auditor.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th January 2019.

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2019 were approved as a true record.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

Harbour Playground

The RFO informed members that the first invoice for the harbour playground had been paid and he will look into the reimbursement of this amount. Cllr Michael Theodoulou commented that a second invoice had been received that day and that the TSO had carried out a playground inspection to ensure all works had been carried out according to the invoice.

5. To consider the budget monitoring report

The budget monitoring report, previously circulated at Town Council was noted. The RFO asked for agreement from members to carry out virements from the insurance budget.

6. Update on annual return

The RFO informed members that the annual return was still in progress. He assured members that it would be completed before his departure date and would aim for 8th March so the report can be handed to the internal auditor before the next Finance, Governance and Personnel meeting.

7. Update on employment contracts

Cllr Michael Theodoulou informed members that there had been issues recently due to the fact that staff did not have employment contracts so were not aware of certain office procedures in relation to holiday and sick leave. It was proposed by Cllr Peter Freeman and seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole

that Carmarthenshire County Council be asked to prepare employment contracts under our SLA. All members were in agreement.

8. Update on setting up a paypal account

Cllr Bob Walpole informed members that, as the Town Council do not have a credit card, a paypal account cannot be set up. After discussion, it was agreed that the RFO would contact the Town Council's bank in the first instance to ascertain if it is possible to issue a credit card as the Council Financial Regulations state two signatures are required on all transactions. It was also agreed that Cllr Michael Theodoulou would review Financial Regulations to clarify if they would need amending.

Action: RFO/Cllr Michael Theodoulou

9. Consideration of the appointment of an internal auditor

The RFO explained that the Town Council currently uses Charles and Co to carry out the internal audit. Cllr Michael Theodoulou declared an interest as Charles and Co are the auditors for his organisation. After confirming with the RFO that the correct procedure had been followed for the initial appointment of Charles and Co, it was agreed by all members to reappoint them for the 2019/20 audit under the same terms of reference as the previous year. This item to be referred to Town Council for ratification, following which the RFO will contact Charles and Co setting out the terms of reference.

Action: Referral to Town Council

10. Update on asset register

The RFO informed members that the asset register is part of the annual return. The current version needs to be updated by the TSO.

Action: RFO to email TSO latest version for update

11. Cheque Signatories

It was commented that following the RFO's departure there would only be three signatories for cheques, Cllrs David Owens, Robert John and Michael Theodoulou. It was proposed and **APPROVED** that Cllr Bob Walpole be added as a signatory and that this item be referred to Town Council for ratification.

Action: RFO to contact Lloyds Bank/Referral to Town Council

12. To set a date for a special meeting to consider a three year strategy plan

It was suggested that this meeting take place after the other committees have met to discuss their three year strategy plan. Therefore the meeting will take place at 6.30pm on Thursday 14th March. The Chairs of Facilities and Assets and Regeneration and Wellbeing should also attend.

Action: Asst Town Clerk

Cllr Michael Theodoulou raised the issue of the Chairs of the main committees being members of all the three committees. He felt that each committees' work had an impact on the others and that it would lead to better governance and communication.

After discussion, two proposals were made:

Cllr Bob Walpole proposed that each Chair should be invited to attend other meetings, rather than being a member, seconded by Cllr Mrs Linda Edwards. This proposal was voted on, with two members being in agreement.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou proposed that it should be a requirement for each Chair to be a member of the three committees, seconded by Cllr John Hedley Jones. This proposal was voted on, with three members being in agreement.

Therefore, the second proposal will be put before Town Council.

Action: Referral to Town Council for ratification

It was also agreed that the Vice Chairs of the three main committees be invited to attend the monthly Chairs meeting.

Action: Asst Town Clerk

13. To set a date for a special meeting to discuss the Auditor General for Wales report

Cllr Michael Theodoulou circulated a summary report on the One Voice Wales presentation regarding the Auditor General for Wales report following his attendance at the Larger Councils committee meeting held on 6th February 2019.

He commented on how the current environment is changing for Councils which is reflected in how auditing procedures are being carried out with the realisation that requirements are different for smaller councils and large councils. There are 730 councils in Wales and of these 7% are larger councils with an income of over £200,000. General reserves were referred to in the report and each council was advised to have a reserves policy. Of the 418 councils looked at, 107 made a surplus and have reserves of more than one year so are acting ultra vires.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the RFO would concentrate on finalising the annual return rather than producing budget monitoring reports etc for Town Council.

The meeting was arranged for 25th March 2019 at 6.30pm.

14. To consider any referred matters

There were no referred matters from other committees.