

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Finance and Management Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn on Wednesday 7th July 2010 at 6.15pm – 8.55pm

PRESENT

Councillors: J. Thompson-Hill (Vice Chairman), M. German, I. German, L. Muraca, G. Green, A. Horobin, A. Pennington, G. Percival, P. Curtis, M. Eckersley.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr N. Acott –Town Clerk/Financial Officer, Mrs L. Hewitt - Committee Support Assistant, Mr T. Brown – Internal Auditor, Mr J. Groves – Head of Leisure and Youth Services, Denbighshire County Council.

APOLOGIES

Councillors: G. Frobisher, G. Jones, J. Morris, J. Davies, S. Frobisher.

44 CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT 2010/11

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer reported that Cllr J. Morris had unfortunately been taken ill shortly before tonight's meeting but had indicated his willingness to continue in post if invited by Committee. Nominations were invited for position of Chairman for ensuing Municipal Year. It was proposed by Cllr I. German, seconded by Cllr J. Thompson-Hill that Cllr J. Morris be appointed. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 1) That Cllr J. Morris be appointed Chairman of Finance and Management Committee 2010/11 subject to confirmation of acceptance.
- 2) That Cllr J. Morris be wished a speedy recovery.

45 VICE CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT 2010/11

Nominations were invited for position of Vice Chairman for ensuing Municipal Year. It was proposed by Cllr G. Green, seconded by Cllr I. German that Cllr J. Thompson-Hill be appointed.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

- 1) That Cllr J. Thompson-Hill be appointed Vice Chairman of Finance and Management Committee 2010/11.
- 2) That Cllr A. Pennington be thanked for his past services.

46 URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr J. Thompson-Hill, Vice Chairman reported upon two urgent items of business for consideration at tonight's meeting that involved Ty Newydd football pitch and Council's insurance policy.

47 TY NEWYDD FOOTBALL PITCH, MELIDEN PM 35

The Vice Chairman welcomed Mr J. Groves, Head of Leisure and Youth Services, Denbighshire County Council who had been invited to address Committee on the above proposed development. Mr Groves provided a brief history on this longstanding proposal and referred to recent success of the football club, involvement of Ysgol Melyd which adjoined the site, opening of the Meliden MUGA, and concerns about flooding of adjacent properties from poorly drained pitch.

He explained that earlier 20K forecast costs had proved unrealistic in light of investigative work and there was currently a nine thousand pound shortfall in available funding to meet the lowest tender price. Within County Council several Directorates had offered financial contributions and there was also money available from Denbighshire's community capital fund. Bills of quantity were being revisited this week in effort to reduce costs.

Following pressure from club, league etc about ongoing delays there was some urgency to progress work not least because of time limited grant offers. The County had arranged for temporary alternative facilities for club once work commenced.

Several Members enquired about future maintenance and need for irrigation of new grass and Mr Groves assured Committee these items would be part of the development programme. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer confirmed that Council had made limited budget provision to assist such schemes. A full copy of County Council's tender document was available for inspection by Members in Town Clerk's office.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Committee recommends support of project in principle and further consideration be given to this item upon receipt of revised bill of quantities and proposed development costs.
- 2) That Mr J. Groves be thanked for his attendance.

48 PAID ACCOUNTS

Details of Paid Accounts and Annual Financial Statements had been circulated with agenda. Committee enquired about payments for maintenance of cycles, support for school swimming, VAT claims and procedures, Welsh translation costs, compensation claim, costs of notice board repairs, inspection programmes for art work, tree removal, holiday activity programme, website hosting, painting of Council Chambers (amended description), Ty Pendre caretaker fees, and costs of posting notices.

Committee reviewed Financial Statements 2009/10 and referred to ongoing commitments to savings and efficiency. The Vice Chairman referred to dramatic changes in public sector funding that will result in loss of County run services. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer referred to need to prioritise services and spending plans. It was suggested each Committee Chairman should review spending plans of his/her portfolio and report back to relevant Committee prior to considering of financial estimates 2010/11.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Paid Accounts of March, April, May 2010 be accepted.
- 2) That Financial Statements 2009/10 be accepted.
- 3) That each Chairman be invited to review portfolio with Town Clerk/Financial Officer and report back to Committee.

49 NOTICE OF AUDIT

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer reported that notification had been received from UHY Hacker Young that deadline for completion of External Audit Returns is 31st August 2010.

50 ACCOUNT AND AUDIT REGULATIONS

A letter had been received from Welsh Assembly Government (copy circulated) detailing proposed changes to audit processes from 2011/12. In essence the date for completion of audit would be earlier e.g. June and process/timing for signing by Responsible Financial Officer, Internal Auditor, External Auditor and Council would be revised.

51 DECISIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer informed Committee that due to additional meeting held this month, proposed budgeted expenditure and various issues raised by Councillors he had circulated details of proposed expenditure (copy circulated at meeting).

Cllr M. German requested reference back of grant awarded to Friends of the Ffrith as he felt the role they had played in planning consultation process and publication of correspondences had been intimidating for some residents.

RESOLVED That Friends of Ffrith grant award of £500 be referred back to relevant Committee for further consideration.

52 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That Public and Press be excluded in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A during consideration of Prestatyn Town Football Club - Mural.

53 PRESTATYN TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB – MURAL

Committee was reminded of an earlier decision by General Purposes Committee to grant £500 towards the above 150 year celebration project. A Member reported information had been received that this project was no longer feasible.

RESOLVED That Town Clerk/Financial Officer make enquiries about current situation and report back accordingly.

(Cllr A. Horobin had declared interest and retired from Council Chamber during this item).

54 PUBLIC OMBUDSMAN IN WALES

The Vice Chairman welcomed Mr C. Halliday, Chairman of Denbighshire County Standards Panel. Mr Halliday explained that as part of the Panel's monitoring arrangements Members often visited Town/Community/County Council as observers and reported upon Code of Conduct etc.

He referred to recently published guidance notes and highlighted actual cases involving courteousness, respect, role of twin-hatted Councillors (joint County/Town Councillors) etc. There was a need for both Councillors and Staff to lead by example and show respect for each other and general public.

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer reminded Councillors that they had all declared their acceptance of Code of Conduct upon election to office. He advised that Council had recently received updated guidance notes from Ombudsman in Wales together with Annual Report 2009/10.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Ombudsman in Wales – Code of Conduct Guidance Notes be circulated to all Councillors.
- 2) That Mr C. Halliday be thanked for his attendance.

(Mr Halliday left after this item).

55 PRESTATYN WEBSITE

Committee was informed that Ms M. Rendell, Business Growth Officer, Denbighshire County Council had confirmed that www.visitprestatyn.com was over three years old and would soon be receiving a makeover to improve performance. The Town Council would be responsible for maintaining its own pages within the tourism based website.

56 PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES PM 214(b)

The Notice of Motion (copy circulated with agenda) had been referred from an earlier meeting but Cllr M. German, original Proposer of Motion requested this item be withdrawn.

RESOLVED That Notice of Motion be withdrawn.

57 PRESTATYN CARNIVAL 2009

Details of grant application together with balance sheet had been circulated with agenda.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Cllr P. Curtis be appointed Chairman for this item.
- 2) That Committee award grant of £1,650

Financial Implications: As per budget provisions.

Legal Implications: S. 137 Local Government Act 1972.

(Cllr J. Thompson-Hill declared interest and retired from Council Chamber for this item).

58 COMPUTUER SYSTEMS

Details of office computer system, current maintenance arrangements, and future plans had been circulated with agenda. Committee was informed that some computers were over four years old and would soon require replacement whilst others would benefit from upgrading work.

Discussion took place on types of system available, improved technologies, current off site backup and support services, software programmes and priority to maintain effective virus and firewall protection.

RESOLVED That Committee accept proposals for replacement and upgrading of computer system.

Financial Implication: £2,704 as per report and contained in maintenance funds.

Legal Implications: S. 123/133 Local Government Act 1972.

59 STAFFING STRUCTURES

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer had circulated details of current staff structures with agenda. He highlighted changes to structure in recent years and expressed appreciation to staff in undertaking slightly different roles and duties. He had spoken to Cllr J. Morris, Chairman earlier in the day about this item and was not aware of any items requiring Committees attention.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Staff be informed of Committee's appreciation of their efforts and support in accommodating new structures.
- 2) That continued use of temporary cover as outlined be accepted subject to budgetary provisions.

Financial Implications: None other than budgeted provisions.

60 OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

Committee was informed that work on electrical installation had recently been completed and relevant safety certificate issued. Similarly gas safety certificate had been received. Interior decoration work was underway and a number of issues with present contractor had been resolved amicably.

Further decoration work on upstairs office following window replacement and external decoration was being planned. Staff were thanked for their understanding during present works programme.

RESOLVED That information be received

Financial Implications: Costs to be reported and contained in building maintenance funds.

61 COMMUNITY CENTRES PM 210

Committee was informed that broadband lines had recently been installed at Ty Pendre Community Building and Seabank Drive Community Centre.

62 COUNCIL INSURANCE

Committee was informed that insurance renewal had been received but there was a potential to reduce the premium by reviewing level of cover for certain items. There was very limited scope for competition of specialist local authority insurance cover, additionally Council was currently involved with a protracted and complicated joint litigation case.

RESOLVED That Town Clerk/Financial Officer, Chairman and Vice Chairman review Council's insurance policy arrangements and be authorised to act accordingly.

Financial Implications: As reported and contained within budget provisions.

Legal Implications: Local Government Act 1972 S. 133.

63 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That Public and Press be excluded in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A during the following items : Office Cleaning Services

64 OFFICE CLEANING SERVICES

Committee was informed of difficulties that had arisen earlier in the year and of actions taken by Town Clerk/Financial Officer following consultation with Chairman. Consequently in-house service arrangements had been trialled and proved successful for all parties.

Members discussed the situation and costs involved that would potentially result in small financial savings for the authority but considerably improved service arrangement.

RESOLVED

- 1) That actions of Town Clerk/Financial Officer and Chairman be approved.
- 2) That Mrs J. Seaman be thanked for her assistance in this matter.

Financial Implications: As reported and contained in budget provision.

Legal Implications: S.144 Local Government Act 1974

Chairman _____

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Finance and Management Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn on Wednesday 22nd September 2010 at 6.15pm – 7.55pm

PRESENT

Councillors: J. Thompson-Hill (Vice Chairman), M. German, I. German, L. Muraca, A. Horobin, A. Pennington, G. Percival, P. Curtis, M. Eckersley, S. Frobisher, G. Jones, J. Davies, A. Sampson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr N. Acott –Town Clerk/Financial Officer, Mrs L. Hewitt - Committee Support Assistant.

APOLOGIES

Councillors: G. Frobisher, G. Green, P. Newell.
Mr T. Brown – Internal Auditor.

96 CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT 2010/11

Nominations were invited for position of Chairman for remainder of Municipal Year. It was proposed by Cllr G. Percival, seconded by Cllr M. Eckersley that Cllr J. Thompson-Hill be appointed. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED That Cllr J. Thompson-Hill be appointed Chairman of Finance and Management Committee.

97 VICE CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT 2010/11

Committee considered position of Vice Chairman's vacancy following appointment of Cllr J. Thompson-Hill to Chairman. It was agreed to leave this matter until next meeting.

98 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman gave notice of two additional items for consideration later in tonight's proceedings: Occupational Health Support and Complaints.

99 PAID ACCOUNTS

Details of Paid Accounts and budget statements had been circulated with agenda. Committee enquired about payments for office Hoover, litter clearance for skatepark during temporary closure arising from unauthorised usage, cost of repairs to notice boards, volume of litter collected from Ty Pendre and future use of volunteers, membership of Wales Council for Voluntary Action to secure updates of employment legislation, cost of town maps, reduced maintenance costs for bus shelters following use of polycarbonate in new shelters, levels of insurance premiums and progression of Prestatyn and District Business Association radio link contribution.

Cllr M. Eckersley reported on Wales in Bloom and informed Committee of the Towns' prestigious Silver Gilt Award 2010.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Paid Accounts June/July and Quarterly Budget Statements be accepted.
- 2) That Prestatyn and District Business Association be invited to provide progress report on provision of upgraded radio link.

100 TY NEWYDD FOOTBALL PITCH PM 35 & 47

Committee was reminded of previous discussions and presentation by Mr J. Groves, Head of Leisure and Youth Services, Denbighshire County Council. The County had subsequently confirmed total project cost was thirty-eight thousand pounds with thirty-three thousand pounds already secured. They were seeking a five thousand pound contribution towards scheme (details circulated with agenda).

Reference was made to continuing efforts by Cllr Rhiannon Hughes, Denbighshire County Council to secure additional funding for project, although no additional money was available to date.

A recorded vote was requested.

RESOLVED That Denbighshire County Council be requested to clarify project timescale and County Councillor R. Hughes be requested to advise upon status of current grant aid application.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllrs G. Percival, M. German, I. German, A. Horobin, A. Sampson, L. Muraca, P Curtis, G. Jones, J. Davies, A. Pennington, M. Eckersley, S. Frobisher, J. Thompson-Hill		
13	0	0

101 FRIENDS OF THE FFRITH PM 19 and 51

The Chairman explained this item had been determined at previous General Purposes Committee and grant of five hundred pounds awarded. However it had been referred back at previous Finance and Management Committee following request from Cllr M. German. During interim the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales had confirmed receipt of complaints about this matter.

Cllr M. German referred to additional email correspondence that he had recently received with electronic copies allegedly sent to other Members but no other Councillor present had received copy. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer indicated that he felt that it was for Council to determine release of funds or otherwise but in circumstances it would be difficult to publicly justify proceeding until further clarification from Ombudsman's office.

During debate Cllr S. Frobisher apologised to Cllr M. German for her broken laughter.

RESOLVED That this item be DEFERRED.

102 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES – FRIENDS OF THE FFRITH PM 74

Cllr I. German felt this item should have been referred back to General Purposes Committee. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer advised normally Council's nominations are determined at Annual General Meeting or Full Council but due to number of ongoing issues relating to the group it was felt important to respond to a request for official nominated representative.

In response to questions Cllrs A. Pennington, G. Jones and M. Eckersley reported they sometimes attended Friends of Ffrith meetings as observers.

A recorded vote was requested for item 2.

RESOLVED

1) That Committee should consider this item tonight.

(Cllrs M. German and I. German abstained from voting)

2) That Cllr G. Jones be nominated as Council's representative for Friends of the Ffrith.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllrs S. Frobisher, J. Davies, G. Jones, P Curtis, L. Muraca, A. Samson, G. Percival, J. Thompson-Hill, A. Horobin		Cllrs M. German, I. German M. Eckersley, A. Pennington
9	0	4

103 CRB CHECKS PM 10/2

Committee was reminded of earlier discussions and recent guidance from Denbighshire County Council about registration and regulated activity (copy circulated with agenda). There was no legal requirement for Town Councillors to be registered.

RESOLVED That information be received and no further action be taken.

104 REVIEW OF DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS PM 128/09

Committee was reminded of previous correspondence and discussions together with responses to Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales. Extracted copy from the Commission's Final Proposals had been circulated with agenda. Denbighshire County Council population statistics had been used to project future size of County Wards in line with the Commissions brief.

Cllr M. German referred to several errors and omissions in the report that he had drawn to the Commission's attention. The Chairman reported that Denbighshire County Council was in first tranche of such reviews but all County Councils were due to be considered by 2012.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Local Government Policy Division be informed of Council's view that favoured localism is being eroded by creation of larger super wards. The development may also lead to loss of individual interest and Councillors may 'lose touch' with electorate.
- 2) That names of County/Town Wards should be the same to avoid public confusion and recognition of separate Prestatyn Meliden County Ward is welcome.

(Letter to Mr Carl Sargeant, Minister for Social Justice and Local Government).

105 FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2011/12

Committee was invited to identify potential changes in service and/or developments that may need to be considered during preparation of financial estimates 2011/12.

106 STAFF ITEMS

The Chairman advised no items brought to his attention.

107 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer reported he had been informed Denbighshire County Council would no longer be able to provide this service due to significant changes in strategic human resources and streamlining of Occupational Health Team to meet efficiency targets.

Following discussions with Denbighshire County Council alternative professional service providers had been identified including Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. Committee was reminded that service was based on pay as you use principle and service charge was similar to previous agreement.

The availability of Occupational Health Support is a requirement of local government employment scheme and recognised as part of 'Being a Good Employer'.

RESOLVED That Occupational Health Support services be obtained from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board as and when required.

Financial/Other Implications: Limited costs to be reported as they arise. No change to budget provisions. Staff to be informed of contact procedures.

(Cllr G. Jones declared interest and retired from Council Chamber during this item).

108 BEING A GOOD EMPLOYER

A copy of the above document produced as part of National Training Strategy is available in Town Clerk's office or electronically www.nalc.gov.uk

109 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That Public and Press be excluded in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Parts 4, 5, 7, 12 during the following item: Complaints.

(Cllr M. German and I. German requested their objections to exclusion be recorded).

110 COMPLAINTS

Committee was informed of the numerous actions available to individuals to gather information, hold public representatives and public officials to account, monitor expenditure and raise complaints. These individual actions were in addition to numerous government legal and self regulating activity that governs public bodies.

Unfortunately on occasions an individual's actions can become excessive and/or repetitive with significant cost, time and resource implications for the authority concerned. At the present time Town Council was experiencing an unprecedented number of complaints about its actions, Code of Conduct issues and voluminous requests for information all arising from a very small number of individuals.

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer circulated a paper detailing current position and referred to responses made to various regulatory bodies involved with such matters and possible abuse of such individual rights.

During deliberations reference was made to an alleged unauthorised recording of previous Council proceedings and Councillor X offered to provide copy to Town Clerk's office in the morning. Members were deeply alarmed to hear about such matters and the Town Clerk/Financial Officer advised that such a recording, without prior consent of Council, would be illegal.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Town Clerk/Financial Officer's report dated 15th September 2010 be received.
- 2) That Chairman and Town Clerk/Financial Officer report back on findings about alleged unauthorised recordings.

(Cllr P. Curtis retired during this item at 7.45pm).

Chairman _____

Press

109 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That Public and Press be excluded in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Parts 4, 5, 7, 12 during the following item: Complaints.

(Cllr M. German and I. German requested their objections to exclusion be recorded).

110 COMPLAINTS

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer circulated a paper detailing current position and referred to responses made to various regulatory bodies involved with such matters and possible abuse of individual rights. During deliberations reference was made to an alleged unauthorised recording of previous Council proceedings.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Town Clerk/Financial Officer's report dated 15th September 2010 be received.
- 2) That Chairman and Town Clerk/Financial Officer report back on findings about alleged unauthorised recordings.

(Cllr P. Curtis retired during this item at 7.45pm).

Chairman_____

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Finance and Management Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn on Wednesday 19th January 2011 at 6.15pm – 8.40pm

PRESENT

Councillors: J. Thompson-Hill (Chairman), M. Eckersley, A. Pennington, G. Frobisher, P. Duffy, M. German, I. German, P. Newell, G. Jones, J. Davies, P. Curtis, A. Sampson, L. Muraca, S. Frobisher, G. Percival, S. Edwards.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr N. Acott –Town Clerk/Financial Officer, Mr T. Brown – Internal Auditor.

APOLOGIES

Councillors: G. Green, A. Horobin.
Mrs L. Hewitt – Committee Support Assistant.

161 VICE CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT 2010/11

Nominations were invited for position of Vice Chairman for remainder of Municipal Year. It was proposed by Cllr S. Frobisher, seconded by Cllr M. Eckersley that Cllr G. Percival be appointed. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED That Cllr G. Percival be appointed Vice Chairman of Finance and Management Committee.

162 PAID ACCOUNTS

Details of paid accounts and budget statements had been circulated with agenda. Members referred to costs associated with excellent holiday leisure activity programme and requested feedback on attendance at next relevant meeting. The payments to Sherratts Landscaping Ltd were queried and suggestion made that community payback teams may be able to assist Council with some litter clearing and other similar work. High levels of vandalism at Prestatyn skatepark throughout summer months had resulted in a number of payments for repair work and consequently future of site was under consideration by Town Development Committee.

Committee also queried VAT payments, RSPB visits as part holiday activity programme and employee travel rates as determined by National Joins Councils agreement for majority of County and Town Councils employees.

Reference was made to external recharge work and training costs associated with WINNERS and Cardiac Rehabilitation programmes. It was felt that further information about current programmes should be provided by County Coordinator.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Paid Accounts for August, September, October, November and December and Quarterly Budget Statements be approved.
- 2) That further details on Holiday Leisure Activity Programme be submitted to next General Purposes Committee.

163 NOTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF AUDIT 2009/10

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer reported upon completion of Audit for period ending 31st March 2010. External Auditor had commented that dates of advert of audit were not compliant with regulations. Committee was informed of process for publicly advertising inspection period including pre notice of notice inspection period. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer explained that a number of factors had to be taken into account when determining periods of notice last year, including changes to legislation after audit was called, dates of Council meetings and financial statement approvals and dates of bank holidays etc. Mr T. Brown, Internal Auditor was satisfied that the public had not been denied opportunity to access and inspect accounts.

RESOLVED That Notice of Completion of Audit 2010 be received.

164 FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2011/12

The Chairman introduced this item and referred to details of financial estimates and budget commentary for each Committee as circulated with agenda. In response to Member's question about General Purposes Committee grant aid process he explained Council's recent change of focus to supporting newly established organisations. It was suggested that Council should adopt a grants theme for next year e.g. youth, mobility issues and special events such as forthcoming Royal Wedding and Zapcat boat race will also need consideration. The Town Clerk/Financial Officer drew attention to the increased financial provision for Other Events contained within financial estimates 2011/12.

During review of Finance and Management Committee proposals discussion took place upon training budgets for Councillors and Staff, nationally agreed travelling rates and significant increases in local government pension scheme contributions.

Town Services and Town Development Committee financial estimates were reviewed and discussion took place upon possible devolution/withdrawal of community services by Denbighshire County Council due to severe budgetary cuts. Members also referred to ongoing debate about future of Prestatyn skatepark and BMX proposals. Both items had financial implications and sums had been included within financial estimates to enable future consideration. Other town projects included Hillside Gardens, tourism signage, and discussion about financial provisions and loan repayments for Scala Cinema and Arts Centre.

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer provided a summary of probable/actual expenditure 2010/11 and referred to expenditure 2011/12 of £360,365 (-5.9%) excluding grant aid. All Committees were forecast to have contained expenditure within budget provisions for the current year. Probable/actual income for 2010/11 was below forecast by -3.35% primarily due to falling bank interest rates and timing of grant aid funds.

The Chairman outlined main proposals for next financial year and referred to Council tax precept options for 2011/12. He indicated that financial estimates included a degree of contingency funding due to uncertainty about external grant funds and severe budgetary constraints for public bodies that included Denbighshire County Council.

A recorded vote was requested for item 2.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Financial Estimates 2011/12 be accepted.
- 2) That Council Tax Precept 2011/12 be £349,650. (Band D equivalent of £46.84 – no change)

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllrs S. Frobisher (p), J. Davies, M. Eckersley, A. Pennington, G. Jones, P. Curtis, A. Sampson (s), G. Percival, J. Thompson-Hill L. Muraca, G. Frobisher (11)	Cllrs P. Duffy, I. German, M. German, S. Edwards, P. Newell (5)	 (0)

A proposal for council tax precept of £46.37 (-1%) was declared LOST.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllrs P. Newell, S. Edwards, M. German (s), I. German, P. Duffy (p), G. Jones, A. Pennington. (7)	Cllrs G. Percival, A. Sampson, G. Frobisher, P. Curtis, L. Muraca, J. Davies, M. Eckersley, S. Frobisher, J. Thompson-Hill (9)	 (0)

165 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES ELECTORAL REVIEW PM 104

A written statement by Carl Sergeant AM, Minister for Social Justice and Local Government had been circulated with agenda. The Minister had concluded that no orders in respect of boundary reviews would be made before 2012 elections.

RESOLVED That information be received.

166 RISK ASSESSMENT PM 71

Details of previous minute had been circulated with agenda. The Chairman invited the Town Clerk/Financial Officer to provide verbal update on current situation of providing relief management cover in event of unforeseen absence. He responded that there was no easy solution for Council although Society of Local Clerks had been trying to establish a Town Clerks locum service and this had recently attracted some interest. In addition local government services are changing with ongoing discussions between Denbighshire County Council/Town and Community Council's about possible devolution of services that may affect future Town Council operations.

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer suggested that there should be further discussion between Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee with report to next meeting.

RESOLVED That this item be further considered at next meeting.

167 OFFICE DECORATION PM 142

Town Clerk/Financial Officers report detailing history of Council Offices following purchase in March 2002 and general improvements to date had been circulated with agenda. The majority of repair work was undertaken only when it became essential although current plans included short and longer term proposals.

Committee was informed that last year Tesco had undertaken a factual property condition survey of Town Council Offices and neighbouring properties prior to commencement of building new retail park. Copy of report available for Members inspection in Town Council Office.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Council Offices report dated 4th January 2011 be accepted.
- 2) That Stadium, Tesco and Denbighshire County Council (Planning Authority) be informed of concerns raised about impact of the proposed retail development and plans for dewatering/drainage of area that may affect neighbouring properties including Council Office and Scala Cinema and Arts Centre.

168 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Cllr M. A. German and seconded by Cllr P. Newell:-

"That this Council has no confidence in Cllr Michael Eckersley as Prestatyn Town Mayor because of the embarrassment caused to the Prestatyn Town Council and the office of Town Mayor following recent statements about Hitler and the Travelling Community attributed to him and which were widely reported in the media"

In addition:-

"His unsubstantiated actions in reporting fellow Councillors to the Ombudsman's office showing a lack of impartiality are unacceptable and unbecoming to the position and role of Town Mayor".

Cllr M. Eckersley made a personal statement in which he stated that press had not reported accurately on events and his comments about members of the travelling community. The press were not present at Denbighshire County Council's internal working group and the story had been based upon hearsay and second hand accounts. In respect of second item he referred to having taken action as an individual not Mayor without seeking advice that he regretted and had withdrawn complaint to Ombudsman.

Reference was made to Councillors Code of Conduct and the higher standards of conduct expected of Mayor, Chairman and those in position of authority. In response to Members question the Town Clerk/Financial Officer reported that he was extremely unhappy about recent events and especially difficulties it had caused within office. He hoped individual Councillors would in future try to resolve matters without recourse to outside public bodies or at the very least seek facts/information/guidance from relevant officials including his Office/County Monitoring Officer/Auditors prior to taking any action.

Cllr Eckersley was asked to apologise by a fellow Councillor on a number of occasions during heated discussions about both matters but he declined to make any further comment. Cllr M. German summed up his reasons for Notice of Motion indicating that Cllr Eckersley had displayed poor judgement and displayed a vexatious attitude towards fellow Councillors showing a lack of impartiality unbecoming to the position and role of Mayor.

A recorded vote was requested.

RESOLVED That Notice of Motion be declared LOST.

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllrs P. Newell, S. Edwards, M. German, I. German, P Duffy (5)	Cllrs G. Percival, A. Sampson, G. Frobisher, P. Curtis, L. Muraca, G. Jones, A. Pennington, J. Davies, M. Eckersley, S. Frobisher, J. Thompson-Hill (11)	 (0)

169 TOP CENTRAL CAR PARK

Committee considered renewal of twelve months rental agreement for the above site which provided free car parking for residents and visitors.

Reference was made to Council's recent request submitted to Denbighshire County Council for free parking at all town centre car parks, and also other plans for promoting Fern Avenue car park.

RESOLVED That Council review its twelve month car park rental agreement.

Financial Implications: £2,000 p.a. contained within budget provisions.

Legal Implications: Property owned by Parochial Church Council. Road Traffic Act 1984.

170 CAB FUNDING 2010/11

Letter, grant application and extracted financial balance sheet had been circulated with agenda together with CAB Annual Meeting Report 2009/10. Committee referred to the good work undertaken by the Citizens Advice Bureau including provision of help for clients seeking benefit grants and payments. Weekly surgeries are currently held at Pop In Centre, Meliden Road, Prestatyn and outreach/home visit service also operates in Prestatyn and Meliden area thanks to Council's support.

RESOLVED That grant of £4,250 be awarded.

Financial/Legal Implications: As per financial estimates 2010/11. S. 137 Local Government Act 1972.

Chairman_____

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Finance and Management Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn on Wednesday 23rd March 2011 at 6.15pm – 8.20pm

PRESENT

Councillors: J. Thompson-Hill (Chairman), M. Eckersley, P. Duffy, M. German, I. German, P. Newell, G. Jones, J. Davies, A. Sampson, L. Muraca, G. Percival, S. Edwards, A. Horobin.

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr N. Acott –Town Clerk/Financial Officer, Mrs L. Hewitt – Committee Support Assistant.
Mr T. Brown – Internal Auditor.

APOLOGIES

Councillors: - A. Pennington, G. Frobisher, S. Frobisher, P Curtis.

205 URGENT BUSINESS

Chairman announced that he had received notice of urgent item involving grant aid funding for skatepark to be considered later in proceedings.

206 PAID ACCOUNTS

Details of paid accounts had been circulated with agenda. Committee referred to cost of smoke alarm repair, heating costs for office and offered potentially cost saving ideas, queried provision of Christmas trees and lighting costs and repairs to Ty Pendre internal lighting. Members also enquired about reason for use of Greengrass contractors for works on footpath linking Seabank Drive Community Centre to Victoria Road, Prestatyn. It was explained that Greengrass contractor undertook a small amount of cleansing work on link footpath that was partly maintained by Council whilst they cleared grounds of Church of Holy Spirit under separate contract to Parochial Church Council.

Payments for daily litter picks by Sherratt Landscaping Ltd at Ty Pendre Memorial Gardens and Prestatyn Railway Station were interrogated and a number of queries raised about quality and frequency of this service. In response to Members question Town Clerk/Financial Officer confirmed that any bona fide volunteer group willing to help Council maintain sites on regular basis would be welcome to contact office.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Paid Accounts for January and February 2011 be accepted.
- 2) That Town Clerk/Financial Officer seek quotations for providing seven day week timer/programmer for Council office heating system.
- 3) That quality and frequency of daily litter picks by Sherratt Landscaping Ltd be further investigated.

207 TOWN CLERK/FINANCIAL OFFICER – UNFORESEEN ABSENCE PM 166

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer had circulated report with agenda and provided a brief history to this item which had been identified as medium/high risk to organisation following Council's risk assessment and internal auditor comments. Committee was informed that Society of Local Council Clerks had recently introduced locum service for North Wales area and this would be available to the authority on service cost basis. He also informed Committee that it would be good management practice to review all staff emergency cover arrangements.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Town Clerk/Financial Officer's report be accepted.
- 2) That a politically balanced sub group (maximum 5) be established to consider staff arrangements in event of unforeseen long term absence of any staff member.

(Councillor nominations for sub group to be forwarded to Town Clerk/Financial Officer).

208 DRAFT PROTOCOL ON MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS

Cllr J. Thompson-Hill, Chairman introduced this item and explained that most County Council's and larger Town Councils have such a protocol in place. The protocols offer a form of protection and guidance in managing both Member and Officer relationships.

He informed Committee that the draft document as circulated with agenda followed national guidelines and had also been circulated to Staff for comment. Members were reminded that all Councillors were duty bound by Code of Conduct.

Cllr P. Duffy thanked Chairman for bringing this item forward as he felt it would help avoid embarrassment and misunderstandings by either party.

RESOLVED That this item be DEFERRED pending outcome of Staff consultation process.

209 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS

Committee considered a number of financial assistance applications together with statements of account (copy circulated with agenda). Members were reminded of Council's grant aid criteria, budgets remaining and declarations of interest requirements where applicable.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the following grants be awarded:

	£
A1 Church of the Holy Spirit	100
A2 Marie Curie Cancer Care	180
A3 Prestatyn Swimming Club	100
A4 Our Kids Club	140

A5	Clwyd and District Railway Heritage Group	100 plus other support and guidance to be offered when project plans finally determined.
A6	Friends of the Ffrith – information board	0 That group be informed of P T C offer to provide locally made notice board to be serviced and maintained by Council
A7	North Wales Chrysalis Trust	240 (100+140)
B1	Prestatyn Community Hospital	350 separate budget provision
B2	Friends of the Ffrith - Environmental	500 separate budget provision

Financial/Legal Implications: All costs to be contained within budget provisions 2010/11. S 137 Local Government Act 1972.

2) That the following budgeted provisions 2010/11 be carried over into next financial year.

C1	Swimming Facilities	3200
C2	Prestatyn Carnival Association	1650

(Cllr J. Thompson-Hill, Chairman declared interest in item C2 and retired from Chamber. Cllr G. Percival, Vice Chairman in Chair for this item) .

Financial Implications/Legal : As per budget provisions 2010/11. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and S. 137 Local Government Act 1972.

Declarations of Interest:

Councillors declared interest and took no part in discussion or voting on following items: -

A1	Church of Holy Spirit - Councillor P. Duffy
A4	Our Kids Club - Councillor A. Horobin
A6	Friends of Ffrith - Councillor M. Eckersley
B1	Prestatyn Community Hospital - Councillor G. Jones
B2	Friends of Frith - Councillor M. Eckersley
C2	Prestatyn Carnival Association - Councillors J. Thompson-Hill, M. Eckersley

3) That Town Clerk/Financial Officer contact Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council and Lottery Fund to enquire about possibility of Funders Fair event in town.

210 DENBIGHSHIRE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE COMMUTED SUMS SCHEME - PRESTATYN

A letter had been received from Snr Planning Officer, Denbighshire County Council advising that two schemes had been assessed and provisionally supported by County working group viz West Meliden Residents Association (Sports Equipment £1,250 and Prestatyn Town Council (new BMX Pump Track £20,000).

RESOLVED That Council welcomes Denbighshire County Council's support for both projects.

211 PRESTATYN SKATEPARK/BMX PUMP TRACK PM137

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer referred to Council's previous discussions and recent Denbighshire County Council offer of financial support towards the project. Members indicated that a small working group should be established to consider various options and provide steer on future plans.

RESOLVED That Prestatyn Skatepark/BMX Track Working Group be formed to review current development options available and make recommendations accordingly.

(Cllrs P. Duffy, J. Davies, S. Edwards and J. Thompson-Hill plus Town Clerk/Financial Officer nominated).

212 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That Public and Press be excluded in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Parts 1, 7, 12 during the following items : Staff Secondment and Information Requests/Accounts for Audit.

213 STAFF SECONDMENT PM 164

Committee was informed of request for twelve month extension of staff secondment arrangement to WINNERS programme(15 hours per week) and Cardiac Rehabilitation Service (3 hours per week) following announcement of Welsh Assembly Government/Health Authority grant funding. The present recharge system would continue pending outcome of health service restructure although no change was forecast until April 2012.

The member of staff had confirmed her willingness to continue with both elements of community health improvement programme until 2012.

RESOLVED That Ms S. Edwards staff secondment arrangement be extended until 31st March 2012.

Financial/Legal Implications : Staff costs recharged as reported and contained in financial estimates 2011/12. Twelve month extension to Secondment Agreement for WINNERS and Cardiac Rehabilitation Service.

214 INFORMATION REQUESTS/PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Committee was informed of large volume of ongoing information enquiries/requests to inspect accounts and provide copy of all paid invoices to named individual. Members were informed of various legislature, individual rights, abuse of such rights and impact upon Council's operations, limited available resources and staff welfare concerns.

The Town Clerk/Financial Officer informed Committee of response from various regulatory bodies and actions that may need to be taken by Council to manage situation.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Council cease further communications with named individual pending legal advice.
- 2) That Chris Ruane MP and Ann Jones AM be informed of Council's concern about high costs associated with repeated individual requests for information and multiple legislation that does not appear to have any regard to impact upon Town/County Council resources.

(Cllr P. Newell retired during discussion on this item).

Chairman_____