

Abergele Town Council

MINUTES

A meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee, held on Thursday 18th October 2007 in the Town Hall, Llanddulas Road, Abergele

499/07 Attendance Register

The Mayor, Cllr. G.P. Davies
Cllr. J.D. Mortimer (Chairman)
Cllrs: C.A. Billington; M. Bird (see Min. 494/07(c)); G.R.K. Brown; A. Lloyd-Roberts;
J.A. MacLennan; D.A. MacRae; R.M. Medlicott; B.C. Roberts; J. Stubbs; R.G. Waters
Mrs C.J. Earley (Clerk)
Several Members of the Public and Press

500/07 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs: D.A. Byrne; R. MacRae; R. Peacock; K.J. Sudlow

501/07 Disclosure of Interest

Members were reminded that they must declare the **existence** and **nature** of their declared interests (using the form provided for this purpose).

502/07 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE and SIGN the Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee, held on Thursday 20th September, 2007.

503/07 Matters Arising on Previous Minutes:

a) Min. 445/07(a) – Re-plastering and painting

- To receive and consider any quotations received for the re-plastering and painting of the Chamber wall.

b) Min. 445/07(b) – Repair of Benches

(i) It was NOTED that no response had been received to the letter sent to Henry Edwards about outstanding repairs to benches, previously approved by the Council.

(ii) Members RECEIVED and considered a new quotation for repairs to the benches at Berthtopic and Pentre Mawr Park.

It was NOTED that it was not cost effective to repair and re-site the Berthtopic bench and that the contractor had instead included a quote for providing a new bench at a suitable site and removing the damaged bench.

Several Members suggested benches which were also in need of replacement.

It was RESOLVED to accept this quotation in principle, but to DEFER the replacement of the bench at Berthtopic until any other requests for new or replacement benches in the area have been fully considered.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED to request that the Executive Sub-Committee considers any requests for new or replacement benches and makes its recommendations back to this Committee.

(iii) Members RECEIVED an updated inventory of benches.

It was NOTED that a quotation for general maintenance and minor repairs to benches (at £60 each) had previously been accepted by the Council and that the Clerk was awaiting recommendations from Members of benches in their wards requiring attention.

It was RESOLVED to DEFER this to the next meeting.

(iv) Benches at Railway Station

A member queried what would happen to the two benches outside the railway station if the building was sold or let.

It was RESOLVED to write to Network Rail to request that this Council be informed of any plans to sell or lease the building, to enable the benches to be re-sited, if necessary.

c) Min. 445/07(e) – Professional Training for Local Council Clerks

(i) It was NOTED that the Clerk has now enrolled on the two year Certificate in Local Policy Course, operated by the University of Gloucestershire, and that her first two modules are Law and Project Management. The first year will require a commitment of approximately 8 hours per week from October to May, with two residential weekend schools (October and February).

It was RESOLVED to authorise the signing of a Direct Debit mandate for the payment of fees (£2,490 for the two year course of study).

(ii) **It was RESOLVED to authorise the full reimbursement of expenses for the recent two day residential course and to ask the Executive Sub-Committee to consider the relevant rate for the mileage element of the claim.**

(iii) A response from One Voice Wales to the query about the lack of current recognised training provision by Welsh Universities for local councils was RECEIVED and NOTED.

d) Min. 448/07 – Cemetery Storeroom

(i) It was NOTED that the Clerk had been contacted by a Member of Mochdre Community Council, who was interested in looking at the old Christmas Decorations to see if they could make use of them.

(ii) It was NOTED that a midi skip (4 cu.yards) to clear out the remaining items in the storeroom would be approximately £100 to hire.

It was RESOLVED to authorise the Clerk to proceed with hiring a skip of the required size, once any decorations wanted by Mochdre had been collected.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk would inform Members when the skip was available, to seek volunteers to assist.

504/07 **Correspondence:**

a) External Audit

(i) Confirmation from Hacker Young of a clean audit report for 2006/07 was RECEIVED.

(ii) **It was RESOLVED to authorise payment of the Audit Fee of £550, plus VAT**

b) Summer Shout Out! 2007

A report on the summer programme of activities was RECEIVED and NOTED.

c) Grass Roots Fund

Information from Conwy Voluntary Services Council on a pilot Grass Roots Fund was RECEIVED and NOTED.

d) Digital Mapping for Town and Community Councils

Members RECEIVED with interest information on Digital Mapping software available for Town and Community Councils from Pear Technologies.

It was NOTED that a package such as this would be beneficial to the Council for planning community schemes such as Christmas Decorations, marking locations of benches and litter bins and also for land ownership queries.

It was RESOLVED to ask the Clerk to make enquiries about whether any similar packages were available from local companies, to enable a comparison of quality of service and costs to be made.

e) Budget Monitoring

Members RECEIVED the quarterly budget monitoring report for the period ending 30th September 2007.

f) High Interest Deposit Bond

A letter inviting the Council to consider re-investing the funds on maturity of the current 3 month term was considered.

It was RESOLVED to proceed with reinvesting the funds for a further 3 month period.

g) Gwynedd Pension Scheme

It was NOTED that the Clerks has been asked to attend an essential presentation for all employers on the key elements of the new pension scheme, to be held in Caernarfon from 10.00 to 12.00 on Friday 9th November.

h) North Wales Veterans Group

A letter regarding a flagship event to celebrate veterans' day in June 2008 was RECEIVED.

It was RESOLVED to acknowledge receipt and to enquire whether the local British Legion branch is involved in this event.

505/07 **Terms of Reference of Committees**

Members received the DRAFT Terms of Reference for the Policy and Finance Committee.

It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt these, with immediate effect.

506/07 **Staff Employment Contracts**

- a) It was NOTED that the Staffing Sub-Committee have met to review and update the staff employment contracts, following advice received from SLCC/NALC, and that the revised contracts will be referred to the full Council for approval.
- b) A recommendation by the Sub-Committee that the Council should increase the hours of the administrative assistant to 20 hours per week (currently 16 hours per week), to reflect the growth in workload and the need to allow time for archiving of records and staff training and development, was considered.

It was RESOLVED to thank Mrs Roberts for her hard work and diligence and to approve an increase to 20 contracted hours per week for the Administrative Assistant.

507/07 **Annual Grants 2007/08**

Members RECEIVED the applications for Annual Grants for 2007/08.

It was RESOLVED to DEFER these for consideration at a special meeting of this Committee, to be held on Thursday 25th October at 6.30 p.m.

508/07 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the following Sub-Committees were RECEIVED:-

- a) The Local Government Sub-Committee, held 24th September 2007

- b) The Christmas Decorations Sub-Committee, held 27th September 2007

509/07

Matters Arising on Those Minutes:

a) Local Government Sub-Committee

- (i) Min. 456/07 – Review of Statement of Licensing Policy

The response submitted by the sub-committee, as detailed in the Minutes, was NOTED.

- (ii) Min. 475/07 – Welsh Assembly Government Consultation

It was NOTED that a meeting with Derek Barker is scheduled to take place on 8th November 2007 and the sub-committee will be re-convened after this date to further consider the two WAG consultation documents.

b) Christmas Decorations Sub-Committee

It was RESOLVED to ENDORSE the decisions of the Sub-Committee, as detailed in the Minutes.

The following recommendations of the sub-committee were then considered:

- (i) Min. 464/07(b)(iv) – ‘Design a Light’ Competition

It was RESOLVED to ENDORSE the recommendation of the sub-committee that the Council launches a ‘Design a Light’ competition, in conjunction with the local junior schools.

- (ii) Min. 464/07(c) – Testing of Power Supplies

It was NOTED that a detailed report following the recent testing of the power supplies for the Christmas Tree lights was awaited and that the sub-committee would be reconvened to consider this further.

- (iii) Min. 464/07(c) – St. George Road Tree

It was NOTED that the Round Table had stopped providing this tree due to health and safety concerns, but that if the Council were able to provide and install a tree, the Round Table would remove the benches to store, provide the lights and barriers and dress the tree.

It was RESOLVED to agree to this request and to order an additional tree for St George Road.

- (iv) Min. 464/07(c)(v) – British Heart Foundation

Members RECEIVED and considered a letter requesting ‘adoption’ of a tree.

It was RESOLVED to ask the Clerk to find out more about this request and to DEFER any decision until the next meeting.

(v)Min. 464/07(d) – Switch-on Arrangements

1. It was RESOLVED to approve the switch on and off dates of Friday 23rd November and Saturday 5th January.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED to endorse the recommendation that the Council should look to arrange an event to celebrate the lights at Slaters' forecourt, Market Street, to include entertainment from Gele Singers and a visit by Santa, and to request the Clerk to complete a Temporary Events Notice application for this, if required.

2. It was NOTED that there was no need for a separate event in St. George.

(vi) Min. 464/07(d)(v) – Christmas Window Competition

It was RESOLVED to ENDORSE the recommendation that this be re-introduced in 2007, with flyers circulated to local businesses and certificates and prizes of £100, £50 and £25 to be provided by this Council.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED that judging would take place during the daytime in the week before Christmas, with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairmen of the two Committees and the Clerk being the panel of judges.

510/07 **The Financial Situation, as at Today, was NOTED :-**

	£
Current Account	1,971.87
Monthly Interest Account	76,346.42
High Interest Bond	<u>30,000.00</u>
TOTAL:	108,318.29
Hall & Development Account	456.74
Hall & Development Reserve	<u>65,340.19</u>
TOTAL:	65,796.93

511/07 **Payment of Accounts**

It was RESOLVED to authorise payment of the accounts, as detailed on Schedule 'A' attached.

The Meeting Closed at 8.40 p.m.

..... Chairman

Abergele Town Council

SCHEDULE 'A'

Payments authorised on Thursday 18th October, 2007:

	Chq No:	Total	Incl. VAT	Statutory Powers
		£	£	(new or unusual payments)
a) Salary payments	BACS	2403.9		
b) Inland Revenue (Salaries)	964	786.98		
c) Gwynedd Pensions	965	546.12		
d) Conwy County Borough Council National Non-Domestic Rates	DD	549.00		
d) Tiscali (Broadband)	DD	18.79	2.80	
e) Petty Cash Imprest Account:	963	104.02		
f) UHY Haccker Young (Audit)	953	646.25	96.25	
g) Public Works Loan Board	DD	2,497.92		
h) John Ffrancon Griffiths (Translation)	954	407.82		
i) Garden Pride - grounds maintenance	955	122.00		
j) Merlin Lighting	956	1,027.30	153.00	
k) Canon (copier rental)	957	168.85	25.15	
l) Canon (service charge)	958	91.76	13.67	
m) Merlin Lighting - new catenary wires	959	1,216.17	181.13	
n) CCBC - summer playschemes	960	1,446.00		
o) Staples - ink etc	961	152.95	22.78	
p) NWATC - meeting	962	25.00		

** Under the Local Government Act 1972, Sect. 137 & 139, the Council can incur expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interest of the area or it's inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.