

Abergele Town Council

MINUTES

A meeting of the POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE, was held at 6.45pm on Thursday 24th May 2012, in the Town Hall, Llanddulas Road, Abergele.

18/12 Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The current Chairman Mr T Rowlands opened the meeting and called for nominations for the Office of Chairman of the Committee for 2012/13.

It was proposed, seconded and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Cllr. R.G Waters, be elected as Chairman for 2012/13.

Cllr. Waters took the Chair and called for nominations for the Office of Vice-Chairman of the Committee for 2012/13.

It was proposed, seconded and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Cllr. M. Bond be elected as Vice-Chairman for 2012/13.

19/12 Attendance Register

The Mayor, T. Rowlands;

Cllrs: M. Bond; G.P. Davies; J.A. MacLennan; D.A. MacRae; R.M. Medicott; R.D. Peacock (retired at 7:25pm); M. Roberts; S. Rowlands; J. Stubbs; K.J. Sudlow; R.G. Waters;

Mrs M. J. Evans (Clerk)

20/12 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs: M.D. Bird; D. Meredith; J.E.H. Pitt; B.C. Roberts; A. Wood

21/12 Disclosure of Interest

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

Cllr D A MacRae Min No: 28/12

Cllr J A MacLennan Min No: 30/12

Cllr T Rowlands Min No: 30/12

22/12 Visitor to the Council

The Chairman welcomed Mr Andrew Bowden Chief Executive of Cartrefi Conwy to the Meeting who provided an overview of future plans for Cartrefi Conwy. Outlining the large scale voluntary transfer from CCBC due to the cost of bringing up the housing stock to standard; tenants were balloted for their opinions. Mr Bowden provided an overview the Offer document and the advantage for Cartrefi Conwy is that they are able to obtain borrowing that CCBC are not able to access. Progress has been made in the last four years to ensure that they meet the Welsh Quality Housing Standard, this they hope to achieve by 2013. 3000 front doors, 2000 bathrooms/kitchen fittings, 300 adaptations have been installed with no additional funding. Cartrefi are coming to the end of the offer document and are now looking as to what they can do to add value. Cartrefi has a 35 year Business Plan to be sustainable and maintain for the lifetime of the properties. The cost for replacing bathrooms, kitchens etc. is £10 million already spent and will be £30 million by the end of the 4 years. This has created jobs for the County of Conwy and they are working with Crest and other groups to provide work placements and social enterprise to people with 65% coming from within the County of Conwy.

£4 million has been spent in Colwyn Bay with 270 properties having boiler replacement, installation, and changes to the environment of the area. Looking forward Cartrefi Conwy aim to build 100 affordable homes over the next 3 years. Land has been purchased for the new Headquarters at the Science Park, Abergele, set by the pond with a tree line barrier from neighbouring housing, this will be putting down a foundation for 100 staff and will address a gap of services. A 16000 sq. ft. premises will be accessible to the public as a ground breaking partnership to provide a Community hub when the offices are closed is under discussion. The aim is to be open by July 2013. A plan to further develop apprentices for plumbing, electricians etc. is in hand to work towards a 'fixed first time' model.

Cllr Peacock retired at this juncture

Welfare Benefit is received by $\frac{3}{4}$ of their tenants and from October 2013 the format will change to a credit benefit to the tenant. This will have an impact of the income of Cartrefi as the income will not be paid direct from the benefit but from the tenant.

The Chairman raised an issue regarding the Science Park creating 1000 high-tech jobs and is 100 houses adequate? Mr Bowden informed members that the 100 houses is a cautious approach and their remit to maintain the existing properties. The financial difficulties with the cuts in Public Sector funding, and Welsh Government grants by 50% prevent affordable housing being built.

Members raised a question regarding the condition of some of the gardens of tenants? Mr Bowden informed members that they take a balanced approach which entails a visit, warning, encourage cleaning up, further cleaning up, and regular walk around by coordinators, the matter is challenging. Cartrefi are in partnership with Crest to encourage curb side collections and recycling and have received the Sustainable Award ten years ahead of the standard requirement.

Mr David Shore arrived at this juncture

The aim is to reduce their carbon footprint and assist people out of poverty. Storage is a problem for the CCBC recycling scheme in some accommodation and are looking to improve the area to provide adequate facilities. Cllr T Rowlands stated that he was impressed with the refurbishment at Maes y Dre. Mr Bowden advised that CCBC had put the funding forward post transfer for the £1.6 million project to refurbish 30 houses.

Members enquired about the Right to Buy Scheme and were informed that this option is still available and if there was a consideration to purchase houses of multiple occupation? Mr Bowden informed members that this may be something to consider in the future but would depend on cost.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bowden for his attendance and informative presentation.

Mr Bowden retired at this juncture

23/12 As Mr Shore Internal Auditor was present members then proposed and seconded to move to item 8 on the Agenda.

Internal Audit and Annual Return for 2011/12

- a) Members RECEIVED a copy of the Statement of Accounts for 2011/12
- b) The Chairman welcomed Mr. David Shore, Internal Auditor, who provided a report on the Internal Audit for 2011/12 stating that the Internal Control Systems were well embedded and he was happy with the targets and the achievements. Mr. Shore advised members that that the cash flow towards the end of the precept period could get tight and recommended that funds are transferred from the holding account to the general account. **An amount of £20k was recommended by Mr. Shore which was PROPOSED and SECONDED by members and RESOLVED that the Clerk to transfers the funds.** Mr. Shore went on to state how tight the deadline for the Return was this year and that the Clerk had obtained an extension to the original date. Mr. Shore stated that he did not know why the date had been brought forward. The Chairman and members thanked Mr. Shore for his attendance and thanked the Clerk for preparing the Return.

Mr. Shore retired at this juncture

- c) The Statement of Accounts for 2011/12, was APPROVED and SIGNED by the Chairman for submission to the External Audit
- d) The Annual Return for 2011/12 will be considered together with the signing of the Annual Governance Statement at the next Ordinary Meeting was NOTED

24/12 **Minutes**

-It was RESOLVED to RECEIVE, APPROVE and SIGN the Minutes of the last meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee, held on 19th April 2012.

25/12 **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes

26/12 **Correspondence**

- To receive and consider the following items of correspondence:

- (a) A letter from Ysgol Glan Gele regarding how the Grant funding for 2011/12 was spent was RECEIVED with a requested that the name of the Clerk be corrected.
- (b) A email from Gwynedd Pensions with regard to Circular 259 'Practitioner and Employer Training Events' was NOTED
- (c) The renewal of the Clerks & Councils direct subscription for 2012 was APPROVED
- (d) A request for grant funding for a Street Party was CONSIDERED. The Clerk informed members that three additional requests for funding had been received as follows:
- Ysgol Glan Gele for flags
 - Two requests from local residents for Street parties

The requests were APPROVED as follows:

- Ysgol Glan Gele £150
- The remainder of fund split between the two requests at £30 each

(e) To receive a copy of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales request for information submitted was briefly discussed and NOTED

27/12 **To consider any urgent Items of Correspondence**

No urgent items of correspondence were received.

28/12 **Postal Delivery Charges**

A request from the Clerk to review the hand delivered post costs due to the increase in petrol and postage costs (currently £15 per month deliveries of packs for both main meetings). **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to amend to £10 per run.**

29/12 **Request for Bus Shelter**

Members received a request from Cllr G P Davies on behalf of residents in Maes y Dre, St George Road, Erw Coch and Wenfro to consider the provision of a Bus Shelter at Ty Gwyn Jones, as residents who catch the No.13 Bus to town find a long walk to the Bus. **It was RESOLVED that the Clerk obtains costs for the Bus Shelter.**

30/12 **The Financial Situation as at today:-**

The Financial situation as at today was NOTED

	£
Current Account	14609.70
Monthly Interest Account	44475.02
General Reserve	<u>70928.35</u>
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>£130013.07</u>

	£
Hall & Development Account	<u>73506.19</u>
Regeneration Reserve	<u>521.58</u>

31/12 **Payment of Accounts**

The payment of accounts falling due, as detailed on Schedule 'A' attached were AUTHORISED

32/12 **Letters of thanks**

Letters of thanks from the following Olympic/Jubilee recipients were RECEIVED:

- Ysgol St George
- St Pauls English Methodist Church

33/12 **Documents for information**

The following documents for information were NOTED

- a) Gwynedd Pensions Project Initiation Document
- b) Talk Talk
- c) Clerks & Councils Direct

Meeting Closed at 7:55pm

Signed
(Chairman)