

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
held in the Council Chamber, Cowbridge Town Hall,
on Tuesday 5th January 2010 at 7.00pm.

Present: Chairman – Councillor L E Taylor
Vice Chairman – Councillor G A Cox
Mayor - Councillor J R Harris
Councillors: Mrs S M Cox, Mrs S Massey, D W Morris, A Thomas and J Wilks.

In Attendance:
Town Clerk – Mr Andrew Davies.

Item 1: Apologies for Absence
Councillor Dr B A Gibbon

Item 2: Declaration of Interests.
None.

Item 3: Matters arising from the Committee Meeting held on 8th December 2009.
No matters arising.

Item 4: Matters arising from the Town Council Meeting held on 22nd December 2009.
Item 13 – Consultation Document received from Public Ombudsman in respect of the Draft Guidance on the Code of Conduct.
No comments have been received for submission and the committee **recommend** that no response is sent from the Town Council in respect of the document.

Item 5: Receipts & Payments Account/Accounts to be paid
Receipts and Payments Accounts for period 1st April 2009 to 31st December 2009 and the statements of bank balances as at 31st December 2009 were circulated to members and read.
Recommended that these accounts be approved.

A list of accounts to be settled from 23rd December to 5th January was circulated to members and read.

Members were circulated with the report from the External Auditor confirming that, in their opinion, no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met by the Town Council.

Item 6: Sewer at the Limes Cemetery.
6.1 To note communications received from the Vale of Glamorgan Council in respect of the diversion of the sewer now agreed by Welsh Water.
Noted.

6.2 To note a copy letter received from Mr Deaves in respect of the sewer diversion
Noted.

Item 7: Grant Aid.

7.1 Application for financial assistance received from Music in the Vale.
Consideration of the application is deferred until the next committee meeting for details of the organisation's accounts to be submitted.

Item 8: Budget 2010/2011.

The Chairman circulated members of the committee with details of current and proposed budget figures (Appendix 1 attached)
Members discussed the budget and precept and it was **proposed** by Councillor D W Morris, seconded by Councillor A Thomas and **recommended** that in order to achieve a balanced budget the precept be increased by 2% with relevant budget adjustments being made (Appendix 2 attached).

8.1 To note letter from the Vale of Glamorgan Council regarding the precept for 2010/2011. A levy of £1.00 will produce £2,491.00
Noted.

Item 9: Correspondence.

9.1 Letter received from the Welsh Assembly Government regarding the 'appropriate sum' under Section 137(3) of the Local Government Act 1972. The amount set at £6.15 set for 2009/2010 remains unchanged for 2010/2011.
Noted.

9.2 Letter received from the Vale of Glamorgan Council regarding support services, which are available to Community and Town Councils signed up to the Charter.
Noted.

Item 10: Welsh Assembly Government – Capital Finance Framework Consultation.

A letter received from One Voice Wales supporting the consultation was circulated to members. Two regulations were highlighted which were of direct interest to Town and Community Councils, these being regulations 5 and 9 contained within Annex 1. Regulation 5 refers to 'Use of Capital receipts' and Regulation 9 Relates to 'Proper Practices'

The letter also referred to the Welsh Assembly Government's updated guidance on Local Government Investment, which is largely aimed at principal councils. Those relating to Town and Community Councils remain largely unchanged.

Noted.

Reference was made for Town and Community Councils to refer to CIPFA Treasury Guide for best practice in the area of producing an Annual Investment Strategy.

Councillor G A Cox agreed to try and obtain a copy.

The Town Council's current Strategy for Investment is for an agreed sum to be invested on the 'Money Market', reviewed on a quarterly basis, and the committee **recommends** that this should continue.

Item 11: Review of Standing Orders.

The Committee considered all suggestions put forward under a review of Standing Orders.

The Clerk advised the Committee that standing orders cannot conflict with the law and that the current Standing Orders are compliant with the 'draft' Standing Orders drawn up by the National Association of Local Councils and endorsed by the Society of Local Council Clerks.

The Committee, after due consideration, **recommends** that

- Standing Orders Nos. 9 and 49 remain unaltered and are compliant with the approved 'draft' standing orders.

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Item 11: Review of Standing Orders (Continued)

- Standing Orders No. 56 to 58 – Interests – no additions are required.

The Town Clerk advised that regulations governing declarations of interest are already in existence and are covered by the Local Government Act 2000 for Wales. (Code of Conduct). The Code was formerly adopted by the Town Council on 17th June 2008 and each individual Councillor signs up to it when making their respective Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

- Standing Order No. 68 remains unaltered.

The cooption process was thoroughly reviewed by a sub committee in 2002 and its recommendation adopted by the Town Council. The process has been ‘tried and tested’ successfully for the past eight years and the committee considers there to be no benefit in the proposal to widen the circulation of any confidential information.

A proposal was also submitted concerning the composition of the Town Council. The Town Clerk advised that Town and Community Councils have no power to alter their own composition, which is governed by statute, namely the Local Government Act 1972 which clearly states who is eligible to stand for election and gives specific reasons why a person may be disqualified from standing. This is also applicable to the cooption process.

Item 12: ‘Are We Being Served’ Report.

The Chairman advised that Councillor Mrs A Burges would represent the Leisure and Amenities Committee and Councillor Mrs S M Cox would represent the Planning Committee to form a sub-committee with Councillors D W Morris and J Wilks. It was agreed that Councillor Wilks should make arrangements for the first meeting.

Item 13: Matters to be discussed at the discretion of the Chairman.

13.1 Concerns were raised about the organisation of the Royal British Legion Annual Poppy Appeal in Cowbridge. Responsibility for the appeal lies wholly with the Royal British Legion and should in no way involve the Town Council any further than at present.

Item 14: Date and Time of next Meeting.

Tuesday, 2nd February 2010 at 7.00pm.

Councillor L E Taylor
Chairman.