Minutes of a Meeting of the

Finance and General Purposes Committee

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 12th March, 2015 at 6.00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor E. R. Harries)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

Councillors: D. R. Sinnett (Chairman)

Mrs. M. Bedford A. E. Byrne

Mrs. R. Gray M. J. Norman

Mrs. Y. G. Southwell

283. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR:

RESOLVED THAT in the absence of the Chairman,

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor D. R. Sinnett,

who was not yet in attendance but who was

endeavouring to attend the meeting, the Chair

for this evening’s meeting be taken by the Mayor,

Councillor E. R. Harries.

284. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman, Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) and Councillor A. H. Miles. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph, had indicated that he would be arriving late.

285. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 12TH FEBRUARY, 2015:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Finance and General Purposes Committee

held on 12th February, 2015, be approved as

a correct record and that they be signed by the

Chairman.

286. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

(a) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were advised of the following engagements undertaken by the Mayor since the 23rd February, 2015:-

4th March - Attended launch of Dwr Cymru’s “Let’s Stop the Block”

Campaign at St. Francis RC School (also attended by the Deputy Mayor)

11th March - Attended the Milford Haven Operatic Society’s

Performance of “Anything Goes” at the Torch Theatre.

(b) Milford Haven Operatic Society:

The Mayor said how much he enjoyed the performance of “Anything Goes”,

which was of an expectionally high standard. He made particular reference to the outstanding performance of the lead, Mr. Aled Davies.

287. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONDAY EVENING’S MEETING OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

(a) Balances in Budget:

The Clerk advised that the Public Works and Planning Committee had asked whether the balance in the Building Maintenance Budget, which totalled approximately £2,000, could be carried over to the next financial year 2015- 2016 in order to be utilised for the essential maintenance work planned at the Cemetery.

RESOLVED THAT the Finance and General Purposes

Committee supports the Public Works and Planning

Committee’s request and agrees that any funds

remaining in the Building Maintenance Budget can

be carried over to the next financial year, 2015-2016.

(b) Date of April’s Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee:

The Mayor informed Members that, as the next scheduled meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee falls on Easter Monday, the Public Works and Planning Committee had recommended that the meeting should take place on the following Monday, 13th April.

As the Finance and General Purposes Committee always take place after the Public Works and Planning Committee, the Mayor asked whether the Finance and General Purposes Committee would consider changing the date of its meeting to Thursday, 16th April.

RESOLVED THAT the date of April’s meeting of the

Finance and General Purposes Committee be changed

from Thursday, 9th April to Thursday, 16th April.

Councillors D. R. Sinnett and Mrs. Y. G. Southwell joined the meeting at this point. The Mayor explained the decisions made by this Committee to date, and it was RESOLVED THAT Councillor Sinnett takes over as Chairman of the meeting.

(c) Milford Fish Festival 2015:

RESOLVED THAT a letter be sent to the Port of Milford

Haven indicating that it has become public knowledge

that the Port is contemplating laying on an event to

compensate for the loss of Fish Week for 2015,

in order that this Council is fully informed and

might be able to play a role in helping to make

this a success, could the Council be given full

details of what is planned.

288. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS/FESTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH MARCH, 2015:

Members discussed the Minutes of the Christmas Lights/Festivities Sub-Committee

held on 4th March, 2015.

(a) Minute 272 (ii) – Remaining Balance in the Christmas Lights/Festivities Budget:

The Clerk said that previously the purchase of lanterns and buttonlites from the Hanging Lantern Company have been paid by debit card, as she could negotiate a better price by paying in this way.

In the new Financial Regulations, under Financial Regulation 6.19 she was restricted as to the use of a debit card for a single transaction, maximum value of £500 unless authorised by the Finance and General Purposes Committee in writing before any order is placed. The Clerk asked for authority from the Finance and General Purposes Committee to proceed with the purchase of the lanterns and buttonlites, which would cost in the region of £1,600 plus VAT.

RESOLVED THAT:-

(i) the Minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Lights/

Festivities Sub-Committee held on 4th March, 2015,

be recommended for approval and adoption;

(ii) the Members of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee wish to record their thanks to the

Chairman of the Christmas Lights/Festivities Sub-

Committee, Councillor A. W. Eden, and his Committee

for all their hard work in organising the Christmas

Lighting and the visit of Father Christmas to the

Town Hall;

(iii) the Finance and General Purposes Committee supports

carrying over the remaining balance in the Christmas

Lights/Festivities Budget to the financial year 2015-2016;

(iv) the Clerk be authorised to use the Council’s debit

card to purchase 800 lanterns and 800 buttonlites

from the Hanging Lantern Company prior to the

end of the current financial year.

289. CCTV CAMERAS IN MILFORD HAVEN:

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph, joined the meeting during the discussion of this issue and apologised for his late arrival.

Members discussed the report by Chief Inspector Diggens in which she gave a summary of the update provided at February’s Full Council meeting.

The Chairman said that unfortunately he had been unable to attend the presentation, and welcomed the comments by Councillors who had attended that meeting or had any additional thoughts or comments in respect of CCTV.

A Member stated that she could only speak for the CCTV camera on Vaynor Road, which had been out of action last year and it had taken months of telephone calls before it was repaired.

A Member said that this Council should get a clear assurance that these cameras will be kept in full working order all the time.

The Mayor stated that he was involved with the cameras from the inception. He had visited the Police Stations at Haverfordwest and Milford Haven to see them working, and was absolutely convinced that they were of value to Milford Haven, and assisted with the policing and also the prevention of crime.

The Chairman noted that the line rentals for these cameras are paid at different periods so there is no lump sum payment involved. A full year’s line rental for all 5 cameras would cost approximately £5,192.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) this Council is to continue to fund the line rental

of the 5 CCTV cameras for the financial year

2015-2016;

(ii) the line rental for the cameras is to be funded

from this Council’s Reserves;

(iii) the Council is to seek an assurance that those cameras

will be maintained in full working order and kept in

excellent condition through the year;

(iv) Members of the Council should have the opportunity,

if they so wish, to see the CCTV cameras in action at

Milford Haven and Haverfordwest Police Stations.

290. DEVOLUTION, DEMOCRACY AND DELIVERY WHITE PAPER – REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT: POWER TO LOCAL PEOPLE:

Members discussed the Consultation Paper on Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People.

The document states that there are 735 Community Councils in Wales – 77 in Pembrokeshire. The White Paper wants to give Local Authorities the power to review the Community Councils in their Councils in their area with a view to reducing the overall number, and for them to complete this work by 2022.

The document states that, as well as changes to Community Council areas, the public needs to know there are standards as to how Community Councils manage their business and how public money is utilised.

The Welsh Government wants to have a set of tests that Community Councils have to pass to be seen as capable and competent. Councils that pass these tests will have extra rights and responsibilities. Those that do not pass the tests should look to do so by joining with another smaller Community Council to form fewer, larger Community Councils.

RESOLVED THAT the document be received.

291. WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON LANDFILL DISPOSALS TAX:

Members discussed a consultation on Landfill Disposals Tax, which will replace the UK Landfill Tax in Wales from April, 2018.

The new devolved power will allow Wales to design and shape a new Landfill Disposals Tax to reflect Welsh priorities and needs.

The document stated that this tax, along with the Welsh Government’s waste policy including statutory recycling targets for local authorities, has contributed to a significant reduction in the proportion of waste sent to landfill with the total tonnage landfilled in Wales falling by 52% between 2001 and 2013.

RESOLVED THAT the document be received.

292. DRAFT REVISED NATIONAL TRAINING STRATEGY 2015/2019:

Councillor M. J. Norman declared a personal interest in this issue, as he is employed by the County’s largest training provider.

Members discussed the Draft Revised National Training Strategy 2015-2019 from One Voice Wales.

A Member suggested that this Committee should consider setting aside some funds for Councillors or members of staff to receive relevant training as and when it becomes available.

A Member said that if the Clerk joined the Society of Local Council Clerks, she would be able to obtain all the information provided by One Voice Wales through the Society of Local Council Clerks.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Finance and General Purposes Committee flags

up the importance of providing training for Councillors

and members of staff, and will bear this in mind as

part of the precept discussion for 2016-2017;

(ii) in the interim, the Clerk investigates the sources of

training support, including Pembrokeshire County

Council and One Voice Wales;

(iii) the Clerk is to seek information on the cost of

membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

293. ONE VOICE WALES LARGER COUNCILS COMMITTEE:

Members discussed the Minutes of the One Voice Wales Larger Councils Committee

which were held in Builth Wells on 25th February, 2015.

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the One Voice

Wales Larger Councils Committee be received.

294. ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY:

Members gave consideration to the Annual Investment Strategy report prepared by the Clerk.

As part of this Council’s Investment Strategy, last year Members agreed to deposit £50,000 in a Nationwide Business 6 Month Saver Account Issue 2. This account matures on 27th April, 2015.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Annual Investment Strategy be accepted

and approved;

(ii) discussion will be held at the April’s meeting

as to whether, and how, the funds in the

Nationwide Business 6 Month Saver Account

will be reinvested.

295. RISK ASSESSMENT:

RESOLVED THAT the Risk Assessment be accepted

and approved.

296. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR:

The Clerk asked whether Mr. R. Edwards, a former Town Clerk, who has carried out the Council’s internal auditing since the financial year 2008-2009, could carry out the internal auditing and the completion of Section 4 of the Annual Return for the Milford Haven Town Council for the financial year 2014-2015.

RESOLVED THAT Mr. R. Edwards, carries out the

internal auditing and the completion of Section

4 of the Annual Return for the Milford Haven

Town Council for the financial year 2014-2015.

297. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

(a) Acknowledgement of Donations:

The Clerk advised a letter of thanks had been received from Miss I. Harries.

(b) Milford Haven Business Circle:

Members gave consideration to the application from the Milford Haven Business Circle for funding for its Founders’ Day celebrations.

Members discussed the history of Founders’ Day and how it had been a massive success at its inception and had declined over the years, due to the lack of public interest.

Members were mindful that the Business Circle was organising an event for the benefit of the town and wished to be supportive, but expressed concern that there has not been any funding set aside in this Council’s precept to support this event.

Concern was also expressed as to the timescale, as it was now March and it could be difficult to organise an event by June that would attract enough interest to make it an annual event, which is what the Business Circle planned.

It was considered that as the timescale is so small, a delegation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee should meet with representatives from the Milford Haven Business Circle prior to Full Council in order that Members will have sufficient information to make a decision regarding funding this event at Full Council.

RESOLVED THAT:-

(i) the Milford Haven Business Circle be advised that

the Council’s precept for 2015-2016 has been set,

and representatives from the Business Circle be asked

to meet with a deputation from the Finance and

General Purposes Committee to discuss the application

in more detail;

(ii) as the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee, Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B   
(Hons) is a member of the Milford Haven Business

Circle, the Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General

Purposes Committee, Councillor D. R. Sinnett, the

Mayor, Councillor E. R. Harries, and Councillors

Mrs. R. Gray and M. J. Norman are to be deputed to

meet with representatives from the Business

Circle prior to Full Council in order that Members

can explore the costings further so a decision

regarding funding can be considered at Full Council

in March.

(c) Financial Assistance from General Donations Budget:

RESOLVED THAT the following decisions be

made in relation to the applications for

financial assistance:-

(i) Milford Haven Operatic Society - £350

*This donation is to be made in accordance with the Milford Haven Town Council’s powers under Section 145 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1972.*

(ii) Relate Cymru - £200

*This donation is to be made in accordance with the Milford Haven Town Council’s*

*powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1973.*

RESOLVED THAT the Milford Haven Town Council

in accordance with its powers under Section 137

of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur

the above expenditure which, in the opinion of

Milford Haven Town Council, is in the interests of

the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them

in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

(d) Balances in General Donations Budget:

RESOLVED THAT the balance of £1,425 remaining in

the General Donations budget is to be carried over

to the financial year 2015 – 2016;

(e) Balance in the Commemorative Blue Plaque Budget:

RESOLVED THAT the sum of £750 in this budget is

to be carried over to the next financial year to

be placed in the Miscellaneous Budget until

Members decide as to how this sum will be

expended.

298. SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS:

RESOLVED THAT the Schedule of Accounts,

as presented by the Clerk for the month of

February, 2015, in the sum of £17,606.03

be accepted and approved for payment.

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