

**Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Personnel, Policy and Finance (PPF) Committee
held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 7pm in the Old Wool Market**

Present	Cllr H Lewis Cllr J Brady Cllr J Hackett Cllr K Jones Cllr M Lewis Cllr J Owens Cllr R Thomas Vanessa Lewis Camacho	PPF Committee Chairman Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio Town Clerk
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Apologies Cllr A Brooker

Observer Cllr P Lewis
Cllr S Pearce
Cllr B Simister
Cllr R Thomas-Turner
Members of the public

Declarations of interest from Members

Agenda Item	Member	Interest	Nature of interest
No declarations			

Update on previous meeting minutes as approved at Full Council on 23 November 2023

- 1) Accounts to 30 September 2023, subject to some queries raised by Cllr R Thomas once access to the Edge account system is re-established, were accepted at Full Council.
- 2) The Sheriffs' Weekend 2024 will be covered under Agenda Item 6.
- 3) A grant of £500 was made to Lifepoint Church Pembrokeshire.

Update on Accounts since Full Council Meeting on 23 November 2023

The Town Clerk confirmed that a meeting was held with the accountant on 28 November who will be preparing a reconciliation of invoices against the bank statements to 30 September 2023 in the first instance. Meanwhile contact is being made with the Edge Accounting System account to transfer access to the Town Clerk. A proposal will be brought to Council in due course to switch from Edge to Scribe Accounting package currently used by other local town councils, which is a good endorsement as to its suitability for the Town Council. It will also mean there will be a local "user support" network.

Budget 2024-25

Cllr M Lewis tabled a draft budget for 2024-25 which at the bottom line reflected no increase in the Council's precept requirement at the rate of £78.75 per Band D property. The budget had been refreshed to take into account of inflation, and increases to insurance premium (100/5), rates by 20% (192/3), water rates by 30% (192/5) and subscriptions (100/12), some of which could be offset by achieving some savings in other areas where some system and service provision arrangements can be improved.

Provision for Members' Allowances (121) had also increased and the provision for cemeteries maintenance and burials (110) had decreased due to £20,000 held in reserves. Cllr R Thomas asked about the increase in budget for the River Festival (115/3) which Cllr M Lewis explained was to increase the allowance for the German Twinning team who will be attending with their Band, requiring additional boat hire, a reception and a general increase in activities on the Quay on the day. A increase of £1,000 had also been included to cover civic regalia (115/6) for this purpose. Cllr R Thomas asked Cllr M Lewis if he was recommending a stand still budget on the proviso that issues will arise during the course of the

year but there will be flexibility to move funds from one budget line to another, if appropriate. Cllr M Lewis confirmed this and that the aim was for proposed revisions to balance out leaving a standstill budget. Cllr R Thomas-Turner asked what replacement of machinery etc (155/6) included which Cllr M Lewis confirmed included branding of the van. An allowance for equipment for Groundsmen would also be available.

Cllr K Jones proposed that the draft budget for 2024-25, as tabled by Cllr M Lewis, be accepted for recommendation to Full Council at its meeting on 21 December 2023. This was seconded by Cllr. R Thomas. Members of the Committee then all voted in favour of this decision.

Resolved	The draft 2024-25 budget, as tabled by Cllr M Lewis, was accepted for recommendation to Full Council at its meeting on 21 December 2023.
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The Sheriffs' Weekend – Haverfordwest, September 2024

Cllr H Lewis noted that as per the last meeting minutes the budget for this event had increased by £4,500 to £7,000. The Town Clerk had included a letter for information in the pack from the Chair of the National Association of City and town Sheriffs of England and Wales (NACTSEW) which provided some detail on the nature of the event. Cllr R Thomas asked Cllr H Lewis if she had thought about establishing a Task and Finish Group (T&FG) to start with the planning and preparations for the event. Cllrs M Lewis, H Lewis, and R Thomas volunteered to join the group. The Town Clerk was asked to circulate an email to all Councillors inviting them to put their names forward if they wished to be involved on the T&FG.

Resolved	To recommend to Full Council that a Sheriffs' Weekend 2024 T&FG be established, the membership of which to comprise of Cllrs M Lewis, H Lewis, R Thomas plus other members of Council who volunteer by responding to the Town Clerk's email invitation.
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Grant Applications (Tier 2) for financial assistance:

Two grant applications had been received, which the Committee were asked to review, subject to completion of the grant scoring assessment being undertaken by the Town Clerk.

The Aloud Charity

Cllr H Lewis noted the charity's link between the Boys Aloud choir based in Cardiff, which was looking to set up a group in Haverfordwest (at Vision Arts), to meet one evening a week during term time. The request made was for £3,000 towards an £8,856 project cost. The project would benefit teenage boys aged 11-19 living in Haverfordwest. There were currently 12 regular attendees in the Only Boys Aloud Choir in Haverfordwest with a target of 20 by the end of the 2023-24 academic year. The range of benefits to teenagers who participated in the project included improved wellbeing and mental health. The Committee were happy to make a contribution towards a number of aspects including room hire, CRB checks, music etc but not towards the items which involved paying wages as that did not fit the grant criteria. Cllr R Thomas proposed a grant award of £1,000 towards the project which Cllr M Lewis seconded. Other Committee members voted in favour of this decision.

Resolved	To recommend that The Aloud Charity be awarded a grant of £1,000 towards 'non' wage related aspects of the project costs.
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Haverfordwest Walking Football Club

Cllr H Lewis noted a grant of £3,000 had been requested to support a £5,974.94 project (Year 1) aimed at benefiting all people aged 40 and over (female) and 50 and over (male) who typically join for reasons of rehabilitation, weight loss, competition, friendship, or just general wellbeing. Current membership stands at 25 although the Club's aim is to develop this to hosting over 40 members by the end of 2025. Year 1, the plan is to have 32 registered members by December 2024 with this project scheduled to be launched in the New Year. Venues include Broad Haven beach and the Pembrokeshire Sports Village (at Haverfordwest High School). The Committee discussed contributing to all items in the cost breakdown (balls, bags, bibs, whistles, training course and 10 hours of pitch time hire only, totalling £1,373. It was, felt that the Club could seek to access or source a portable Defibrillator for less cost by applying to the

British Heart Foundation Scheme which would cover the upkeep and maintenance for free. Cllr M Lewis proposed a grant award of £1,373 towards the project which Cllr R Thomas seconded. Other Committee members voted in favour of this decision.

Resolved	To recommend that The Haverfordwest Walking Football Club be awarded a grant of £1,373.
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Standing Orders Review

The Town Clerk had requested the opportunity to review the model standing orders issued by One Voice Wales and to feedback comments to Council.

Resolved	That the Clerk attend the Task and Finish Group looking at the Standing Orders to feedback her comments there, prior to that group recommending amendments/adoption to Full Council.
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Haverfordwest Civic Society – Blue Plaques

The Town Clerk had engaged with Lesley Turner, Secretary of the Civic Society to follow up the email sent to the Council in September 2023 requesting support to replace 21 blue plaques located in the town. The Civic Society were not in a position to share in this cost which was estimated to be approximately £650 per plaque, plus VAT. The Committee recognised that this would be an expensive project circa £13,650, plus VAT. The review of the plaques during the Summer 2023 had been jointly carried out with a member of the Town Council after the latter had received a complaint from a member of the public.

Cllr M Lewis acknowledged the importance of the plaques to our historic town and reiterated the relevance of incorporating QR codes, as used in other towns and cities. He proposed to suggest that the plaques are replaced over a 5-year programme (4 plaques a year). Cllr K Jones agreed with Cllr M Lewis in relation to importance and seconded his proposal. Cllr J Hackett noted that QR codes would support 'virtual tours' and suggested contact is made with PCC in relation to the regeneration work they are doing as this might be something to bring alongside that. Cllr M Lewis further proposed that the Civic Society be asked to provide three quotes, even though it might be the case that there is only one supplier of plaques who is not local. Members of the Committee could see that high cast metal plaques could be obtained for c £135 a plaque. The Society can be informed that while not committing to this expenditure at this stage, the Council are mindful to give some money. The Committee will make a decision/recommendation from there. Cllrs K Jones seconded Cllr M Lewis' proposal. Cllr R Thomas advised that there are four plaques in storage at the Old Wool Market which could be used. All members of the Committee voted in favour of Cllr M Lewis' two proposals.

Resolved	That the Clerk contact the Civic Society to request three quotes to replace the plaques and to advise that the Council are minded to provide some money and would consider supporting a 5-year rolling programme.
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Youth Involvement – Correspondence from Pembrokeshire Youth Team at Pembrokeshire County Council

Cllr P Lewis provided the background to a request for funding made some time ago from County Cllr Rhys Evans when an action plan was being put together to take the Youth Team over to Oberkirch, Germany, but which was later sourced by themselves. Subsequently the Town Council were asked for £7,000 for when this was trip was to be reciprocated for the Oberkirch youth to come over to Haverfordwest. However, at the time this request was not submitted correctly on behalf of the Youth Team. Cllr R Thomas-Turner noted that he had a meeting with the Youth Team, having taking this relationship from Cllr K Jones, and asked for guidance on what to say to them. Cllr M Lewis proposed that if the request is raised by the PCC Youth Team, they are advised that when there is a firm proposal to make a request for financial assistance, they should complete an HTC grant application (available via the website) and submit this to the Town Clerk. Cllr K Jones seconded this proposal and all Committee members voted in favour of it.

Resolved	That Cllr R Thomas-Turner may advise PCC Youth Team that when they have a firm proposal and wish to apply for financial
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	assistance, they should complete and submit a grant application available via the HTC website.
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Items for next agenda (item brought forward on agenda for staffing to be last item):

- 1) Review of the Audit Wales Audit Opinions for financial years 2022-23 and 2021-22. Cllrs P Lewis asked the Town Clerk to circulate both reports to the Committee.

Members of the public left at 8.00pm.

Staffing Matters

All voted in favour of exercising the PUBLIC BODIES ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960.

Resolved

That as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting

Resolved

To recommend to Full Council in December that vacancies for a Mace Bearer and Sword Bearer are advertised in January, in time for 2024 Civic Service and Mayor Making event in May.

Cllr R Thomas-Turner advised that he has set up a Surgery to hear from his constituents in Castle Ward on Thursday 11 January 2023 to be held upstairs in the Castle Hotel, Castle Square Haverfordwest, at 7.00 p.m. Cllr J Hackett, of same ward, said he would be happy to attend and provide support also. Noted that the PPF Committee meets at 6 p.m. the same evening (Cllr Hackett would be attending) but it should be finished in time for Cllr Hackett to attend the Surgery.

The meeting closed at 8.11 pm