

**Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Personnel, Policy and Finance (PPF) Committee  
held on Thursday 6 June 2024 at 6pm in the Old Wool Market**

<b>Present</b>	Cllr H Lewis Cllr J Hackett Cllr M Lewis Cllr R Thomas Vanessa Lewis Camacho	PPF Committee Chairman PPF Committee Vice Chairman Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio Town Clerk
<b>Apologies (Item 1)</b>	Cllr J Brady Cllr A Brooker	
<b>Observer</b>	Cllr P Lewis Cllr J Owens Cllr B Simister Cllr R Thomas-Turner Members of the public	

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. Pending the Committee Chair appointments at the Full Council Meeting on 20 June, Cllr H Lewis agreed to Chair the meeting (all voted in favour).

**2. Declarations of interest from Members**

<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>Nature of interest</i>
No declarations			

**3. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 April 2024**

- 3.1) **2024 National Sheriffs' Association AGM (27-29 September 2024)** – Clerk in the process of providing information to the National Association to share with association members. The Task & Finish Group were due to meet again on 19 June 2024.
- 3.2) **Haverfordwest Civic Society Blue Plaques** – item would be covered under Agenda Item 8.4.
- 3.3) **Mace and Sword Bearer vacancies** – the appointment of a new Sword Bearer, who attended his first Civic Event, at Mayor Making, was noted. The vacancy for Mace Bearer was still open and would be informally advertised through the website, notice boards, social media, and by the Clerk network and members of Council.

**4. Accounts to 30 April 2024**

- 4.1) The Income and Expenditure Statements to 30 April 2024 were reviewed. Cllr P Lewis asked about Members Allowances and Expenses, the breakdown for which the Clerk referred to as set out on page 3 of the more detailed budget headings transaction report.

The timing of the payment of allowances for Officers i.e. Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Sheriff at the start of the year, with members allowances paid to Council members at the end of the year, was discussed. Cllr J Owens, former Mayor, noted earlier advice from One Voice Wales (OVW) on this which the Clerk said she would check. Cllr R Thomas proposed that all Officers (not just the Mayor) should receive their allowance at the start of the year, subject to OVW clarification. Cllr J Hackett requested an amendment to the proposal to include establishing what would be the situation if an Officer were paid but subsequently stepped down from that office, and would the Council then be required to pay a further allowance to their successor in the same year. Cllr R Thomas seconded the proposal and all voted in favour.

Cllr R Thomas asked about the amount ringfenced for Old Wool Market and that shown as Total Expenditure in the Budget Comparison report, which the Clerk confirmed were the same values in the accounts as approved during the Council's budget and precept discussions in February 2024.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>To accept the Accounts to 30 April 2024. All in favour.</b>
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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>That all Officers receive their allowances at the start of their year of office, subject to earlier One Voice Wales advice and clarification of position should an Officer subsequently step down (and have either spent or not returned their allowance - which should be a matter of expenses policy). Clerk to check and revert.</b>
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4.2) **Banking – Limited on application for Charge Card for use by Groundsman**

Following Council's earlier decision for the one Groundsman to have access to a charge card to cover incidental expenditure, which it could not be made on account, rather than the frequent use of petty cash, but on making application the Bank confirmed that the minimum credit limit on the card would be £1,000. An internal limit of £250 had been agreed, which was felt sufficient for this purpose, but Council were being asked to now approve the application, based on the new information that the Bank imposed a higher upper limit which could not be changed. Cllr J Hackett proposed that the application proceed on the basis of continuing with the internal limit of £250 per transaction, as before, but accepting the Bank's imposed limit was £1,000. This was seconded by Cllr R Thomas. All voted in favour.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>To proceed with charge card application for the Groundsman accepting the higher card limited imposed by the Bank to the internal limit set by Council.</b>
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4.3) **Draft Internal Auditor's Report and Annual Return for year ended 31 March 2024**

The Committee reviewed the Internal Auditor's report which recognised the efforts of new staff and to ensure that the sudden change in administration did not impact the Council's ability to provide services to the town and its inhabitants. Turning to the Annual Return, the Clerk pointed out the additional sections which had been completed showing the Bank Reconciliation, and the Statement of significant variances (increases or decreases) on the financial statements from the prior year. She noted that this year the Audit Wales audit wished to consider the Council's standing orders, financial regulations, and a copy of the Council's report on how it was contributing to the well-being of its area in accordance with its requirements under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. A copy of the Council's 2023-24 annual report would be considered at the Full Council meeting on 20 June.

The Clerk also provided the accounts to 31 March 2024 comprising a Consolidated Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure Account, and Summary Trial Balance. Additional reports provided including a Cashbook and Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2024. The Clerk noted that other reports were available, including lists of closing creditors and debtors, for inspection.

Cllr P Lewis asked about the timetable for when the accounts would be made available to the public to inspect should they so wish. The Clerk noted that the Audit Notice which sets out Elector's rights would be published on the Company's website and public areas on 14 June (i.e. before 16 June deadline which falls on a Sunday). The period for the public right of inspection of accounts would be between 1 and 26 July 2024 and the Annual Return, to be approved by Council by 30 June 2024, and requested information, is required to be sent to Audit Wales by 5 July 2024.

Cllr J Owens acknowledged the situation where PPF Committee are in the position to be reviewing the draft Annual Return prior to the Full Council meeting on 20 June. Cllr R Thomas thanked the Clerk and support staff for their efforts in achieving this milestone. It was noted that the Annual

Return, Accounts and Annual Report would be brought to Full Council on 20 June following final checks.

## 5. **Anti-Racism Action Plan**

Cllr H Lewis invited the Committee to review the Action Plan, noting that the paper, as presented, clearly set out the proposed plan, which the Committee was being asked to recommend to Full Council be adopted, and for £1,200 per annum to be allocated from the Administration Budget to an appropriate new budget sub-heading for the purposes of Council's engagement in respect of the Action Plan.

Cllr R Thomas-Turner noted that the Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan aims to make Wales an Anti-Racist nation by year 2030, with the purpose to make a significant change to the lives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people. The Town Council is called upon to recognise the importance of fostering an inclusive and anti-racist community that values diversity in all respects and promotes equality. On 9 May 2024, Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) had adopted the Action Plan, which followed an earlier motion submitted to their Council on 7 March 2024. Council was being asked to recognise that some elements of the Action Plan will not be unique to the Town Council and will have a greater probability of being achieved through collaboration with the Working Group being established by PCC, which will comprise representation from the Town Council and other town and community councils in due course.

The Committee commended Cllr R Thomas-Turner for the hard work which had gone into introducing the Action Plan to the Council and at the County level. Cllr J Hackett proposed and Cllr R Thomas seconded a recommendation to Council to adopt the Action Plan, as set out in Appendix 1 and which forms part of these minutes, and that £1,200 per annum is allocated for engagement purposes in our community. All voted in favour.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>The Anti-Racism Action Plan (set out in Appendix 1) be adopted by the Town Council and that £1,200 per annum be allocated from the existing Administration budget for the purposes of engagement on the Action Plan in our community.</b>
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## 6. **Portfield Recreation Committee (PRC) – Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

The Committee noted the report dated 29 April 2024 from the PRC on the operation of the 3-year SLA (financial years ending 2024-26) with Town Council entered into in October 2023 but which runs from April to March in each year in respect of services provided by PRC to the Lower Racecourse. The PRC set out the expenditure to date and that remaining which had been allocated to be spent on drainage and hedge cutting once the nesting period ends on 1 September.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Full Council to note the report received from Portfield Recreation Committee dated 29 April 2024, noting that year 2 and 3 instalments under the SLA will be scheduled for payment in October on the anniversary of the date of entry into the SLA.</b>
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## 7. **Accounting software, Website, and Old Wool Market flooring proposals**

### 7.1 **Scribe Accounts**

The Clerk noted the comparisons undertaken of three accounting software applications, including the current package used by Council, which determined that Scribe Accounts package, with additional modules to manage "cemeteries" and "bookings" (Sports Pavilion, Banners, Gazebos, litter picking hub equipment, and meeting rooms) electronically while linking income/invoicing, where appropriate, through Scribe Accounts, as the most appropriate solution to provide full accounting and other key admin support to Council in a manner which would greatly improve the efficiency of processes by reducing man hours needed to complete many basic, albeit important, procedures performed by the Clerk and other admin staff. Thereby freeing up time to focus on

other, more strategic, projects. Cost, including year 1 onboarding, £3,137 (£2,340 per annum ongoing). It is proposed that the existing accounting package run alongside Scribe Accounts to minimise any disruption to Council's financial reporting in the second half of the current financial year, or until such time the Clerk and internal auditor is satisfied that the former may be discontinued. Council is asked to approve the subscription to Scribe and the expenditure from the Administration budget.

## 7.2 Website

The Clerk noted that following Council feedback a re-evaluation of the Town Council's website had taken place during the last 3-4 months. The current site, which was commissioned some 4 years ago, had increasingly become less efficient for the Administration to upload important content without assistance, or as a platform to be developed to align with Council's aspirations to provide much improved communications and engagement opportunities with its stakeholders. Again, comparisons had been undertaken of three website providers, including the existing provider, to take us on this journey. The preferred provider (Company A) could provide the full breadth of service provision, including analytics on website performance, and a potential Welsh language translation tool (for example). Company A also hosts two other town council websites in Pembrokeshire. There would be a one-off cost of £3,478 to design website, including enhanced customised events calendar and direct booking to calendars functionality. Monthly hosting and security costs, including platform updates and testing, are similar to the existing monthly fee. Cllrs B Simister and S Pearce were available to meet with Company A and had endorsed their suitability as a partner. Cllr J Owens, noted that she had previous dealings with Company A, which had also been positive. Council is asked to approve engagement with Company A to host the Council's new website and the expenditure from the Administration budget.

## 7.3 Replacement Flooring – toilets, cleaning cupboard, and front office (ground floor)

In furtherance of making the Council's offices a more pleasant and welcoming space for staff and to the public and other stakeholders who use the meeting space, and following the flood damage which affected the downstairs toilets and cleaning cupboard flooring, the Clerk sought quotes to replace some of the existing floor comprising vinyl in the 4 toilets (upstairs and downstairs) and cleaning cupboard, and carpet in the front office on the ground floor. Cost: £2,100 +VAT to include fitting, and removal of old flooring. Council is asked to approve this expenditure from the Administration budget.

Cllrs J Hackett and R Thomas proposed and seconded all three proposals. All voted in favour.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Approval by Full Council of proposals:</b> <b>1) Subscribe to Scribe Accounts, including Scribe Cemetery and Scribe Bookings modules at one-off cost of £3,137 (ongoing £2,340 pa)</b> <b>2) New website provision (Company A) at one off cost of £3,478 (ongoing circa £1,296 pa)</b> <b>3) Replace flooring at Old Wool Market at cost of £2,100+VAT</b>
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## 8. Applications for Financial Assistance

### 8.1) Pembrokeshire People First (PPF)

Grant application amount requested: £1,336 for a project to provide equipment (currently hired) to support presentations by Learning Disability Champions to vulnerable, low-income adults, who attend various events in Haverfordwest, the County and region. Positive impact on 146 young adult members living within Haverfordwest plus their families who rely on PPF to provide them with the everyday support they need. *Recommendation that £1,336 grant award is made.*

### 8.2) Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools Project (Pemb Coast National Park Trust)

Grant application amount requested: £3,000 for project working with 11 schools in the Haverfordwest cluster of schools which will benefit hundreds of pupils. Supports teachers to

develop outdoor learning, providing bespoke training for teaching staff, inspiring outdoor learning sessions for pupils and create new learning resources that are available for local schools (primary and secondary). Enables and encourages children to spend more time outdoors and to connect with nature which is proven to improve physical and mental wellbeing, and helps connect communities. *Recommendation that a £1,500 grant award is made, representative of 5 schools located in the town of Haverfordwest.*

8.3) **Haverfordwest Yarn Bombers**

Grant application amount requested: £1,500 to continue to provide popular yarn bomb drops in Haverfordwest, and storage/meet up costs for a group of approximately 30 members aged between 29 and 94 years who meet weekly throughout the year. 80% of the group live in Haverfordwest and for some it's the only time they get out and see people. Thousands of people benefit from yarn bombs as it lifts spirits and makes the public feel better about the town. *Recommendation that £1,500 grant award is made.*

8.4) **Haverfordwest Civic Society – Blue Historic Plaques**

Further to earlier discussions with the Society, the amount of financial support requested: 50% of £15,000 (£7,500), with match funding secured for other 50% for the replacement of 20-25 plaques in the town. *Recommendation that Town Council purchase the plaques, receiving the 50% contribution from the other match funder, and to gift the plaques to the Civic Society.*

Cllrs R Thomas and J Hackett proposed and seconded the four financial assistant proposals. All voted in favour.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Grant payments are awarded to:</b> <b>1) Pembrokeshire People First in the amount of £1,336</b> <b>2) Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools Project (Pemb Coast National Park Trust) in the amount of £1,500</b> <b>3) Haverfordwest Yarn Bombers in the amount of £1,500</b> <b>4) Haverfordwest Civic Society – 50% of the cost for replacement of blue plaques (£7,500).</b>
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9. **Items for next agenda (item brought forward on agenda for staffing to be last item):**

None raised.

10. **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**

Members of the public left at 7.15 pm.

**Recommendation**

**That the Clerk seek approval of Council at Emergency meeting being held immediately after this meeting to Deputy Town Clerk appointment and in order to progress Groundsman vacancies.**

The meeting closed at 7.19 pm

## APPENDIX 1

### HAVERFORDWEST TOWN COUNCIL

#### ANTI-RACISM MOTION –PPF COMMITTEE MEETING ON 6 JUNE 2024

##### **Purpose**

Recommendation for Council to consider a motion to adopt an Anti-Racism Action Plan (the Action Plan) and the inclusion of Council representation on the working group being established by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) (the Working Group), which will be dedicated to monitoring and addressing issues related to racism in our community, and providing updates to Council (through the Town Council's representative).

Recommendation for Council to allocate some budget to use towards council engagement on a quarterly basis in the region of £300 per quarter (£1,200 per annum).

##### **Background**

The Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan aims to make Wales an Anti-Racist nation by year 2030, with the purpose to collectively make a significant change to the lives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic People.

Racism is when someone treats another person differently or unfairly because of their background, culture, or religious beliefs or how they live. Being anti-racist is not just about being not racist, it means doing something about racism and standing against it. It means changing our laws, policies, practices and the way we work across services, so people are treated fairly and their lives are better.

The Town Council is called upon to recognise the importance of foster an inclusive and anti-racist community (as part of what will be a much wider-initiative as other town and community councils adopt the Action Plan) that values diversity in all respects and promotes equality. Recent events locally have highlighted the need for proactive measures to address racism and to ensure that our community remains a welcoming and safe place for all residents of different faiths and ethnicity.

On 9 May 2024, PCC adopted the Action Plan, which followed an earlier motion submitted to their Council on 7 March 2024.

The Action Plan put forward to Council is set out below.

Council is asked to recognise that some elements of the Action Plan will not be unique to the Town Council and will have a greater probability of being achieved through collaboration with the Working Group i.e. anti-racism training, and collaboration with local organisations, community leaders, and residents to develop and implement anti-racist initiatives and programmes. This will avoid a duplication of effort as the Action Plan is gradually adopted by other towns and community councils.

##### **The Action Plan**

“Haverfordwest Town Council (the Council) reaffirms its commitment to promoting anti-racism and fostering of an inclusive environment within Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, and Wales.

The Council will:

- 1) actively work to eliminate racial discrimination and prejudice, both within its own operations and in the wider community.
- 2) collaborate with local organisations, community leaders, and residents to develop and implement anti-racist initiatives and programmes.

- 3) review and strengthen existing policies to ensure they are inclusive and address any systemic issues that may contribute to racial disparities.
- 4) Provide anti-racism training for staff, elected officials, and community leaders to raise awareness and promote cultural competence.
- 5) Participate, through Council member(s) representation, in a working group dedicated to monitoring and addressing issues related to racism, with regular updates provided to the Council through such Council member(s) representation.
- 6) Celebrate diversity in all respects and promote cultural awareness through events, education, and community engagement initiatives.
- 7) The Council commits to engagement with the community to listen to the experiences and concerns of residents affected by racism and to take appropriate actions to address these concerns.”

Conclusion: this motion reflects the Council’s commitment to building a more inclusive and anti-racist community. By taking these steps, Council aims to foster understanding, unity, and equality to all residents in Haverfordwest.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

PPF to recommend the adoption of the above motion and Action Plan by Full Council and for £1,200 to be allocated from the Administration budget to a new budget sub-heading i.e. Engagement

Town Clerk  
06/06/24