

**Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Personnel, Policy and Finance (PPF) Committee
held on Thursday 5 September 2024 at 6pm in the Old Wool Market**

Present	Cllr H Lewis Cllr M Lewis Cllr R Thomas Cllr D Thomas-Turner Vanessa Lewis Camacho Emma Greear	PPF Committee Chair Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk
Apologies (Item 1)	Cllr J Brady Cllr J Hackett Cllr J Owens	
Observer	Cllr P Lewis Cllr R Thomas-Turner Members of the public	

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declarations of interest from Members

Agenda Item	Member	Interest	Nature of interest
5.3	Cllr R Thomas	Personal	Proposed New Authorised Signatory
11	Cllr R Thomas	Personal/ Prejudicial	Trustee of the Haverfordwest Racecourse (Public Park) Trust. Represents Council on the Portfield Recreation Committee.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. None were received. Cllr J Hackett had confirmed in writing to the Clerk that he was willing to continue to stand. Cllr R Thomas proposed the appointment of Cllr J Hackett as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year, which was seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	Cllr J Hackett is appointed Vice-Chairman of PPF for civic year 2024-25
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4. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 June 2024 and matters incorporated in the draft minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 18 July 2024 (in lieu of the July PPF Committee meeting).

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June had been approved by Full Council on 18 July 2024. The following updates were noted:

Staffing	The preferred candidate had accepted the offer for the Groundsman/Caretaker position and started employment on 5 August.
Scribe Accounting	See Agenda Item 5.2
Sheriffs Association 2024 AGM & Conference	See Agenda item 4.1

4.1) Sheriffs Association 2024 AGM & Conference (27-29 September)

Cllr R Thomas provided an overview of the programme of events for the Friday Welcome Reception through to the Sunday Church Service.

5. **1) Review of Income and Expenditure and Budget Comparison to 31 July 2024**

The Committee reviewed and accepted the year-to-date (April to July 2024) Income and Expenditure report and Budget Comparison (the Accounts). The Clerk noted that Pembrokeshire County Council had not yet been invoiced for 2024 Picton Centre Rent and other utilities charges to date, pending current lease discussions. The following recommendation was proposed by Cllr R Thomas. Seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	1) To accept the Accounts to 31 July 2024 as presented. 2) Clerk to invoice PCC for the 2024-25 Picton House rent and utilities and other charges to date
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2) Update on Scribe Accounts Implementation

The Committee noted the Deputy Town Clerk's paper outlining progress with setting up Scribe Accounting, which was that we are very close to entering the 2024-25 data having successfully entered the financial year's opening balances. The basic set up of the Upper Prendergast Cemetery had also been completed in the Cemetery Management Module and new graves and Exclusive Rights of Burial are being entered as required. The entering of early records had commenced, supplementing the information available with access to Ancestry and FindMyPast websites to fill in an gaps.

3) Approval of amendments to Bank Signing Authority

The Clerk provided a list of the current authorised signatories for Council's approval following the removal of all former signatories. It was suggested that Cllr R Thomas, as Deputy Mayor/Vice Chairman, should be added as an authorised signatory. The following recommendation was proposed by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. Seconded by Cllr H Thomas. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	1) To approve the current list of authorised signatories as presented. 2) To add Cllr R Thomas as an authorised signatory on the Council's bank account(s).
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6. **1) Applications for Financial Assistance**

Noted that no applications had been received.

2) End of Grant Report from Only Boys Aloud Haverfordwest (August 2024)

The Committee welcomed the thank you report received from Aloud-Cymru following the £1,000 Grant awarded to the Charity in December 2023.

7. **Local Government Pay Claim 2024-25 Update (SLCC, 1 August 2025)**

The Committee noted the Local Government Pay Claim 2024-25 update from the Society of Local Council Clerks, notifying that the pay award (to be determined by the trade unions) from 1 April 2024 would be delayed to late October at the earliest. The recent Government announcement of a pay increase for the public sector of 5.5% can not be imposed on local government and the process for agreeing the 2024-25 pay award will remain as above irrespective of what happens in other parts of the public sector.

8. **One Voice Wales Guidance – Councillor Attendance (6-month rule)**

The Committee noted the guidance provided to all Councillors, setting out the statutory requirement where if a member of Council fails to attend a meeting during a six-month period, that member automatically ceases to be a member of the Council, unless the failure was due to some other reasons approved by the Council before the end of the six-month period. The content of the guidance is centred around ensuring compliance of this 'fixed rule' where there is little room to avoid its reach.

9. **PCC Early Budget Consultation for 2025-26 (closing date 29 September)**

The Clerk had circulated the request to Town and Community Councillors to provide details of PCCs early budget consultation for 2025-26 for sharing with their communities. PCC is projected

to have a funding shortfall of £84.6m over the next four years, with £30m of that relating to 2025-26. The responses to the consultation will assist PCC in informing the development of its budget for 2025-26. The following recommendation was proposed by Cllr R Thomas. Seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	Members of Council are asked to complete the online response form individually by the closing date of Sunday 29 September 2024 following the link/instructions in the request form.
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10. Timeline for the Town Council’s 2025-26 Budget

The Committee considered the Annual Financial Timetable of Actions guidance from One Voice Wales, which set out the customary timetable starting with budget preparation in the Autumn (November) to submission of Precept to the County Council by end the of January in each year, and in relation to budget monitoring. The Clerk recommended that the Council continue to implement the timetable to include a review of activity plans in October. Proposed by Cllr R Thomas. Seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	Council follows the recommended Annual Financial Timetable of Actions for the 2025-26 Budget
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11. 3 Year Service Level Agreements – Upper and Lower Racecourses 2024-25

The Clerk had conducted a due diligence exercise of both Service Level Agreements and was comfortable that the required information under the SLAs had been provided by both service providers ahead of the Year 2 anniversary payment due in September 2024. The Committee felt that in future the payment should be made at the start of the financial year. Cllr D Thomas-Turner proposed, Cllr H Lewis seconded the following recommendation. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	1) Year 2 SLA Payments to be included in the accounts for payment to be approved by Full Council meeting on 19 September 2024. 2) Year 3 SLA Payments to be made at the start of the financial year (April 2025).
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12. Process and Procedure for review of Council Policies

The Clerk provided a list of the Council’s current policies highlighting those which had been reviewed during the year at the Annual Meeting. The remaining policies had a range of review dates, which the Clerk could not verify without reviewing each policy. The Clerk proposed to conduct her first review of the Council’s by prioritising the existing and new policies according to best practice, and bringing two policies, as a standing agenda item, to each PPF meeting for review and approval, prior to the Committee making a recommendation to Full Council for the policies to be adopted. Proposed by Cllr R Thomas. Seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

Recommendation	The Clerk to review / prioritise the Council’s policies bringing two policies to each PPF meeting for review/approval prior to making a recommendation for the policies to be adopted by Full Council.
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13. Staffing Matters

No update other than the new staff were settling in.

14. Items for next agenda

- a) Review of policies (new standing item)
- b) Library Funding

Next meeting – 3 October 2024, 6 p.m. at Old Wool Market

With no further business to consider, the meeting closed at 6.55 pm