

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Personnel, Policy and Finance (PPF) Committee held on Thursday 7 November 2024 at 6pm in the Old Wool Market

Present	Cllr H Lewis	PPF Committee Chair
	Cllr M Lewis	Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio
	Cllr J Owens	
	Cllr R Thomas	
	Cllr D Thomas-Turner	
	V Lewis Camacho	Town Clerk
	E Gear	Deputy Town Clerk

Absent Cllr A Brooker

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Brady and J Hackett (Vice Chairman).

2. Declarations of interest from Members

<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>Nature of interest</i>
None			

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 5 September 2024 and any PPF Committee-related items discussed/decisions made at the Full Council meeting held on 19 September 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2024 and recommendations approved by Full Council on 17 October 2024. The following updates were noted:

Sheriffs Association 2024 AGM & Conference	An invoice had been received covering the road closure which had increased the total net expenditure. An update on the payment of the final invoices would be brought by the Clerk to Full Council meeting on 21 November to close this off.
Grant payment to LifePoint Church Pembs; and return of grant money funded to Council by Grwp Resilience (and same amount to be earmarked for Grwp Resilience in 2025-26 budget)	The former had been paid. The latter is being processed.
Policies	The Civic Regalia and Robing Policy, and Lone Working Policy were adopted.

4. Approach to Council input into responses to Consultations

The Clerk provided links to both consultations for discussion.

Recommendation	The National Consultation on implementing the Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024 and the consultation on the PCC Local Development Plan 2 are reviewed by the Clerk with Cllrs D and R Thomas-Turner (both of whom had attended the briefings) and are reported back to Council prior to the submission deadlines in December.
-----------------------	--

5.1 **Review of Income and Expenditure and Budget Comparison to 31 October 2024**

The Committee reviewed the I&E and Budget Comparison to 31 October 2024 (the Accounts) and had the opportunity to ask questions. The same accounts would be included in the Full Council papers issued ahead of 21 October 2024 for approval.

Recommendation	To accept the Accounts to 31 October 2024.
-----------------------	---

5.2 **Potential impact of the Chancellor's October Budget on the Council**

The Clerk gave an initial view of the impact on the Council's finances from April 2025 in relation to the proposed increase in Employer's NIC from 13.8 to 15% of circa £3,600pa (subject to any compensation for town councils by Welsh Government which may follow) and the increase in the Living Wage.

Recommendation	To note the potential impact on the Council's employment costs following the Chancellor's October Budget and that this would be reviewed in more detail as part of the 2025-26 budget preparation (by the Staffing Committee, in the first instance) and precept discussions, in December.
-----------------------	---

5.3 **Photocopier lease tender arrangements**

The Clerk advised that the five-year copier lease was up for renewal and that information on the Council's copier / usage requirements had been provided to potential bidders who would be contracted to arrange the copier lease and for the supply of consumables and servicing over the term. A recommendation will be brought by the Clerk to Full Council meeting on 21 November for decision.

Recommendation	For the supplier of a new five-year photocopier lease and maintenance contract to be brought to the Full Council meeting on 21 November 2024 for decision.
-----------------------	---

5.4 **Robe proposal for 2025-26 Civic Year**

The Deputy Clerk had sought costings for comparison for the renewal of civic robes for consideration, noting the gradual wear and tear of the Mayor and Sheriff robes. The Committee discussed the Deputy Mayor wearing a robe, on occasions when they attended events for the Mayor. It was felt there was some merit in the Deputy Mayor receiving the Mayor's robe, at the point that robe is replaced. The low quality of the Clerk's robe was also noted.

Recommendation	That a plan is established from the 2025-26 budget onwards for the replacement of civic robes over a period of time, say, 5 years with priority being given to replacing one robe next year.
-----------------------	---

5.5 **2025-26 Action Plan and Budget**

The Clerk noted that the action plans (PPF and MES) are work-in-progress and will be brought to the committee meetings in December. A fresh approach was being taken to align the budget for each committee to its terms of reference, with the expectation that the committee regularly review its own budget, alongside a longer-term action plan. This review would be undertaken independently to the overall budget reviews by the PPF Committee and at Full Council.

6. **Grant Application from Haverfordwest Allotments & Cottage Gardens Association (HACGA)**

The Committee considered the Tier 1 application for £500 to help fund the replacement of an existing earth track with an all-weather track to provide tenants with a safe useable access to garden all year round.

Recommendation	Subject to receiving some further information from the Association, the grant payment of £500 is made to the HACGA.
-----------------------	--

7. **Review of policies and procedures:**

1) Meeting Attendance Policy; and 2) Volunteering Policy

The Committee received drafts of these new policies.

Recommendation
1) Subject to the inclusion of an additional section requiring that Councillors keep their cameras on during a “hybrid” meeting, which is important for voting purposes and to ensure that the meeting quorum is maintained at all times, the Meeting Attendance Policy and Procedures document was approved for recommendation by Full Council. Proposed by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. Seconded by Cllr R Thomas. All voted in favour.
2) The Volunteering Policy and Procedures documents were approved for recommendation to Full Council. Proposed by Cllr R Thomas. Seconded by Cllr D Thomas-Turner. All voted in favour.

8. **Staffing Matters**

The Clerk updated on staffing including training.

Recommendations:	To note the refresher training being undertaken by both groundsmen to keep their mowing certificates up to date.
	Staffing Committee meeting to be arranged for the end of November.

9. **Items for next agenda**

- a) PPF Action Plan and Budget

Next meeting – 5 December 2024, 6 p.m. at Old Wool Market

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