



St Asaph City Council
Cyngor Dinas Llanellwy

Minutes of the Meeting of St Asaph City Council held on 12 October 2016 at 7.00pm in the Meeting Rooms, Roe Plas Meadows.

Present: Cllrs: J Ellison, M Gedd, C Hardie (Mayor), G D Hodgkinson BEM, P G Morton, J O Roberts, B J Rust, R Williams (Deputy Mayor).

Clerk: Mrs. H Stewart BEM

The Mayor welcomed Mr. Ken Williams from the Gideon Society who was at the meeting to present a Gideon Bible to Cllr Hardie (Mayor). Mr. Williams informed the Council that over 90 million copies of the Gideon Bible were presented each year and with being a member of the local branch of the Society it was a privilege for him to present not only a complete bible but also a pocket version to Cllr Hardie as the Mayor of St Asaph City Council. Cllr Hardie thanked Mr. Williams who then left the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs: P Scott (holiday) and D Thomas (family celebration). Cllrs P Mitchell and D Owens were absent with no apologies received.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Williams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 13a as the applicant was her GP.

3. Public Participation

There were no requests to address the Council.

4. Urgent Matters

Cllr Roberts and Hardie each had a matter of urgency they wanted to discuss later in the meeting.

5. North Wales Police Service

Once again PCSO Dave Jones had experienced a quiet month in regard to crime in the City. There had been a break-in at a property in Deans Walk which was an unusual crime for St Asaph and some rechargeable batteries had been stolen from a shed in Mount Road. The police were still clamping down on possession of cannabis and recently there had been 4 charges.

There had been a complaint from a resident in Bishops Walk about cars racing at high speed around the car park at Roe Plas Meadows and Cllr Gedd raised concern about cars parking on pavements by the school. PCSO Jones said that unless the parked cars were causing an obstruction there was not much the police could do.

When reporting crime it was important that people did not use PCSO Jones's mobile number because he may not be on duty, the correct numbers to use were 101 or 999. He asked if this could be highlighted in the next edition of the City Times.

6. Library

a) The Service Level Agreement (SLA), between Denbighshire County Council and the City Council had been considered in a draft form at a previous meeting of the City Council. The document listed the responsibilities that the two councils had agreed to meet to ensure the continued running of the library service for 2016-17. This final version of the SLA had been signed by the County Council and approval was now required for the Mayor to sign it on behalf of the City Council.

Resolved that: the SLA between the two councils for 2016-17 be signed by the Mayor

b) Liz Greaves, Head of Customer Communication and Marketing for Denbighshire County Council (DCC) was welcomed by Members. Ms. Greaves had been invited to answer questions about the proposals for

Phase 1 of the refurbishment of the library. She explained that she had only taken over the responsibility for the library in April so had not been party to any earlier discussions. She was keen to work with the City Council to develop the library into a community resource and encourage flexible use of the building. Since she had been in post she had heeded the comments about the opening times and now the library was open on a Saturday and would be for the foreseeable future.

Phase 1 of the refurbishment would mainly be on improving the interior of the building. Using the £100,000 available from DCC changes would be made to allow better use of the facility whilst improving the main entrance. The major changes to the actual structure would come in phase 2 which would require outside funding and would be dependent on the success of phase 1 increasing use of the building and raising some revenue.

The plans required some further discussion with library staff about shared space and the challenge was to actually start encouraging other groups to have shared use now. There was a request that a kitchen should be available for use as this would encourage coffee mornings and the like to take place. Cllr Morton asked a question about the future contributions required of the City Council and Ms. Greaves answered that the SLA was a one year agreement. New discussions would be required for any future funding arrangements between the two councils and Ms. Greaves said she was happy to come back to discuss this with the City Council.

Cllr Hardie thanked Ms. Greaves for attending the meeting after which she left.

7. Mayor's Report

Cllr Hardie said his report was short although he had been quite busy attending several civic services and a meeting with DCC to discuss the refurbishment of the library. The Champions Awards Ceremony he had attend last week, was most humbling. Although enjoyable it was tear jerking to hear about how young people have experienced and dealt with adversity.

8. Reports from County Councillors

There was no report to receive since both County Councillors were not present at the meeting.

9. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016, having previously been distributed were presented for approval. The Clerk asked that an amendment be noted to the figure of £745 in 60914/09 Matters Arising, it should read £476.

It was raised that perhaps the question of who owned the trees in Elwy Crescent should have been minuted. The question had been asked following a letter received and reported in Agenda item 22: Correspondence. The trees were thought to be the responsibility of DCC since the County Council maintained the grass area.

Resolved that: subject to the above amendments the minutes be signed as a correct record.

10. Matters Arising

160914/20 Cyclecross- the organiser was in agreement with the £300 bond and the event would be taking place on 27 November.

11. Events Committee

The minutes of the Committee held on 27 September were presented for noting. Progress on some of the actions was reported.

12. Financial Management

a) Income and Expenditure Budget

A full set of budget papers up to 30 September 2016 from the Alpha software, was provided for each Councillor present. This information was much more detailed than the financial reports previously provided for consideration. Whilst some Members felt comfortable with interpreting the information others voiced a request for a training session to explain the printouts. This would be organised by the Clerk.

Appreciating the comments made attention at this meeting, was directed to the Summary Receipts & Payments page. This showed the percentage of estimated budgets spent to date. The reports being prepared up to 30 September should show a percentage spend/income of about 50%. Two areas were significantly in excess of this figure.

i) Income for 101 Administration 70%. This was due to having received two out of the three precept payments for the year.

ii) Payments for 401 Public Spaces 76%. Whilst some of this could be explained as a seasonal variance there was also a late invoice from last year paid out of this year's budget. The variance should decrease in the forthcoming months as the frequency of grass cutting reduced.

Overall the budget remained tight and as previously stated by the Clerk, caution was required in committing to any additional expenditure with reserves at such a low level.

b) Schedule of Payments

Resolved that: the schedule of payments as listed below be approved for payment and the items of committed expenditure be noted.

Payee	Chq No	Net	Vat	Gross	Item
Glascoed Timber	3558	£ 1,201.20	£ 240.24	£ 1,451.44	Outside
NMWALC	3559	£ 16.00	£ -	£ 16.00	Lunch
C Hardie	3560	£ 28.56	£ -	£ 28.56	Incidental Civic Expenses
G Pendleton	3561	£ 643.68	£ -	£ 643.68	Salary, Expenses & Mileage
Rialtus Business Solutions	3562	£ 113.00	£ 22.60	£ 135.60	Annual software support - Alpha
Abergele Tree Services	3563	£ 70.00	£ -	£ 70.00	Black poplar report
Snowdonia Fire Protection	3564	£ 45.80	£ 9.16	£ 54.96	Fire Extinguisher Service
Co-Options	3565	£ 40.00	£ -	£ 40.00	Litter picking
H Stewart	3566	£ 554.14	£ -	£ 554.14	Salary
Totals		£ 2,712.38	£ 272.00	£ 2,994.38	
Committed Exp					
JT & M Signs		£ 150.00	£ 30.00	£ 180.00	Road signs -
Roses for Planters		£ 300.00	£ 60.00	£ 360.00	Remembrance
SLA for Planters		£ 310.23	£ 62.05	£ 372.28	
Work to black poplars		£ 900.00	£ -	£ 900.00	
		£ 1,660.23	£ 152.05	£ 1,812.28	

13. Planning Applications

Recommend that:

a) Application Ref: 46/2016/0903 Erection of extension and alterations to dwelling
There be no objections

b) Application Ref: Natural Resource Wales Package B
Be noted.

14. Audit

The External Auditor's Report had been received and whilst there were no matters of concern there were a number of actions recommended to assist the Council in improving its budget monitoring and financial systems.

An action plan would be produced and monitored during the rest of the year to ensure the recommendations were being implemented.

Resolved that: the External Auditors report be noted and action agreed.

15. Co-options

Cllr Hodgkinson asked what progress was being made to fill the casual vacancies on the Council. No new applicants had made contact with the Clerk and as the ordinary elections approached the six month moratorium placed on filling any such places would take effect.

It was suggested that an article about being a City Councillor and what skills the Council were looking for should be placed in the edition of the City Times produced in the New Year.

16. Website

Cllr Hodgkinson asked about the progress on updating the website. This was gradually being addressed subject to the time available within the contracted hours of the Clerk. The idea of a training session for councillors had been raised earlier in the year and was still wanted by a couple of councillors. Arrangements would be made with the website company maintaining the site.

17. Correspondence

The correspondence presented was considered and the actions arising are listed below:

a) St Asaph Cathedral – It was agreed that a letter of support would be provided for building an extension for toilets and a tearoom.

b) DCC Database replaced with DEWIS – It was agreed that the Council should register its details on the website

c) Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) – unfortunately the tree at the Talardy Hotel had a TPO which did not prevent it from being felled. The Council did not therefore, consider it would necessarily make any impact on putting TPO's on other trees in the City nor did it have the resources to do so.

d) Elections – the scale of fees issued by DCC to cover elections next year was noted as £3500 and would be included in the budget setting for 2017-18.

e) Casual Vacancies – the six month moratorium placed on filling casual vacancies before an ordinary election was noted.

f) Christmas Lights – the Mayor had received a letter about the Christmas lights on the trees in the Church Garden. There was concern about the connections being safe and the bulbs not being LED lighting, using a large amount of electricity. With Council resources being limited there was no budget this year to replace the lights. It was suggested that a donation or sponsorship might be forthcoming from a local company and Cllr Williams offered to try and secure a financial donation.

Matters of Urgency

a) Cllr Roberts informed the Council he had been receiving a large number of emails from a resident about the work required to Springe Garden Bridge in connection with the flood alleviation work. The resident claimed he had not received a reply to emails he had sent to the Clerk. The Clerk assured Councillors that a reply had been sent explaining the decision of the Council when the planning matter had been considered and she had informed the resident there had been no further discussion nor would there be on this matter.

b) Cllr Hardie (Mayor), informed the Council that he had received a letter of resignation from the Clerk. A four week notice period was required bring her official engagement to an end on 8 November however, she had agreed to continue in post until the new year whilst a new clerk was recruited.

Cllr Hardie thanked her on behalf of the Council for the work she had done to date.

The meeting concluded at 8.43pm

Signed

Chairman of the Full Council meeting held on 9 November 2016