

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE HARLECH COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE OLD LIBRARY, HARLECH AT 7.30 P.M. ON 06.01.25

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Ceri Griffiths, Giles Bentham.

PRESENT

Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite (Chairman), James Maxwell (Vice Chairman), Edwina Evans, Wendy Williams, Rhian Corps, Gordon Howie, Mark Lewis, Simon Turner, Martin Hughes, Reg Chapman, and Cllr. Annwen Hughes and Gwynfor Owen (Gwynedd Council).

There were 6 members of the public present.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on December 2nd 2024 were found to be correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes

MATTERS ARISING

HAL

The following report was received by Cllr. Mark Lewis with regards to the latest situation regarding HAL 3 members of HAL board including Heidi Williams resigned on 11th December. • They were replaced by Cllrs. Mark Lewis, Simon Turner and Reg Chapman. • Mark Lewis was elected the new chairman. • Simon Dawson and Dave Matthews remain. Simon D is handling finance • The HAL company articles have been updated to “The objects of the Company shall be to find a new use for the swimming pool site that best serves the interests of the community of Harlech.” • HAL currently has about £6k. Burn rate has been reduced to £800 per month. • We are waiting until a decision is made before further disposal of swimming pool assets such as commercial kitchen and inflatable • We don’t have exact costs, but best guess at the moment is that it will cost £750K to fix the roof, perhaps £250K to remediate structural damage from the leaks, £300K to replace the HVAC plant and £250K to fix up the building and surrounds. Estimate £1.5M - £2M to re-open as a swimming pool. More to convert to a gym. • The joint HAL / HCC team is developing a list of options for the future of the swimming pool site. These include: sale for housing development; sale for hotel development; sale for hospital development; transfer to a hotel developer in return for access to their swimming pool or a new smaller pool or community facility; resurrection as a leisure facility owned new non-profit with access to new grants; transfer to HCC and resurrection as a leisure facility funded by a public works loan paid for by an increase in council taxes; demolition and conversion to car park for the golf club (with a potential land swap to open a new public car park for the town); transfer to Moelwyn Gymnastics; sale of asset on the open market; transfer of asset to HCC. We have cast the net as wide as possible. Only financially viable options will be considered in February. • A public meeting to present the viable options and receive feedback is scheduled for 7pm

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on 19th February at the Memorial Hall. • A decision will be made by the joint HAL / HCC team by the end of February. • If necessary, HCC will be asked to approve the option of an asset transfer at the February council meeting. • Precept was paid to HAL in December after HCC members were appointed to the board. Recommend paying again in January. Unused funds will be returned to HCC, as will any proceeds from sale of the asset. Funds will be needed to pay liquidator and legal fees. At the moment the Board Members meet every Friday.

Independent Remuneration Panel

The Clerk reported that a form had to be signed by every Councillor again this year with regard to the above. There is a need to list every rule that is been adopted in the Council minutes and if a payment rule regarding costs is been adopted the Councillors that DO NOT claim expenses sign the form declaring this. After a discussion it was agreed to adopt the payments rule regarding costs again this year and it was agreed that everybody that wanted to claim costs would do so but it was important that everybody return the form back to the Clerk once it was completed. Of the Members present 4 Councillors decided to claim the allowance and 6 Councillors decided not to claim the allowance.

Budget Plan

The Clerk had already distributed copies of the above showing the differences between the expenditure that had been made up to the 31st December 2024 since the beginning of April 2024 and what had been earmarked on the budget plan up to the end of December to every member. It was reported that the Council had spent £55,781.00 (which included bank charges) since the start of the new financial year and this was £36,168.35 less expenditure than what was earmarked in the budget for the year. The members went through the different expenditures that had been made and the differences that were on the business plan individually. Also Cllr. James Maxwell presented a budget plan that he had prepared showing the same but with the amount left to spend during this financial year added to it.

Council's Financial Risk Assessment Policy

Because there was not enough time to discuss the above item tonight, that the item be moved to February's agenda.

Council Projects 2025/26

This item was not discussed.

Council's Budget for 2025/26

The Treasurer gave each member a copy of the Council's accounts up to the year ending 31st December 2024 so that they could see what the financial situation was like. A discussion took place and it was decided that an estimate of the following costs were going to be with the Council during the next financial year - Council's insurance £2,200, Clerk's wages £2,200, Clerk's costs £1,800, Clerk's office allowance £500, tax on Clerk's wages £440, Clerk's Accountant £228, donations £1,500, Harlech & Ardudwy Leisure £10,000, Memorial Hall committee £2,500, Old Library committee £2,500, Friends of Tanycastell School £3,000, Cylch Meithrin Harlech £2,000, cemetery costs £3,500, grass cutting of the

cemetery £2,200, grass cutting of the footpaths £2,500, grass cutting King George playing field £3,000, Bron y Graig Nature Trail £20,000, Welsh Water £900, salt bins £400, christmas £6,000, benches £3,000, emptying litter bins in playing fields £1,000, run and upkeep of toilets by Memorial Hall £5,000, contribution to keep public toilets open £12,000, One Voice Wales £350, training for Councillors £2,500, translator £1,700, Councillors allowance £1,500, Solicitors fees £5,000, rent meeting room £200, upkeep of both play parks £20,000, bus shelters £5,000, upkeep of tennis court £6,000, inspection of play parks £700, Council's website £2,000, allotments £5,000, tennis court rates £120, external auditors £4,500, internal auditors £600, wildflower community garden £500, Penygraig land £500, sundries £1,000, upkeep of various items £250, bank charges £150. This made a total of £145,938. (Draft figures) As it was not possible to come to an agreement regarding the above figures so as to set the Council's precept for the financial year 2025/26 to hold another meeting to discuss this matter only on the 27th of this month.

Council's Precept for 2025/26

A letter was received from Gwynedd Council with regard to the above. As the Members could not come to a decision with regards to the budget it was agreed to meet again on Monday the 27th of this month at 7.00 p.m. to discuss the budget further and set the precept for the 2025/26 financial year.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported that there was £5,664.47 in the bank, £91,913.05 in the reserve account.

Invoices needing payment since last meeting

One Voice Wales - £40.00 – Councillors training
Revenue & Customs - £110.00 - tax on Clerk's wages
Mr. M. J. Kerr - £480.00 - opening grave re the late Mrs Olwen Muriel Lloyd
Mr. M. J. Kerr - £480.00 - opening grave re the late Mrs Gweneth Mair Evans

Monies received since last meeting

Gwynedd Council - £990.35 – reimbursement grass cutting footpaths

Applications for financial contributions

Harlech & Ardudwy Leisure - £1,824.75 – precept proposal (monthly payment).

The above payments were processed by Cllr. Edwina Evans and Cllr. Wendy Williams approved the payments and permission was granted to the Clerk/Treasurer to make payment on line or by cheque at the end of the meeting.

MATTERS DISCUSSED AFTER THE FINANCE MEETING

PLANNING APPLICATION

Listed Building Consent to install temporary roof over theatre storage area Coleg Harlech, Harlech (NP5/61/LB3Y)

Support this application.

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CORRESPONDANCE

Welsh Government

Received a letter from the above informing the Council that the appropriate sum under Section 137(4)(a) of Local Government Act 1972, Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2024/25 will be £11.10 per elector. The Clerk reported that the latest number of electors she has is 1,136 and therefore the Council have the right to contribute up to £12,609.60 to outside bodies.

Mr. Gareth Jones

Received a letter from the above asking for permission to park thier work vehicles on the land near the allotments while they carry out work on Pen y Bryn Bach nearby. It was agreed to give permission.

SIGNED.....Chairman

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