

FLINT TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Flint Town Council, held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Flint, on Monday the 23rd January, 2017.

PRESENT: The Town Mayor, Councillor I.B. Roberts.
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs. V. Perfect.

Councillors: D.L. Cox, J.P., J. Johnson, G.T. Jones,
Mrs. L. Jones, M.W. Moore, Mrs. M. Perfect,
T. Renshaw, N. Schofield.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: were received from: Mrs. B.A. Aldridge, J.P.,
L.A. Aldridge, O.B.E., P. Cunningham, G.F. Conway,
M/s L.M. Francis, The Reverend B. Harvey, S. Jones,
N. Williams.

IN ATTENDANCE: J.A. Loveridge, Town Clerk.
Mrs. S.C. Williams, P.A. to the Clerk.

PRAYERS:

Before the meeting was opened, Councillor Terry Renshaw, led all Member in prayer with a special payer for councillor B.A.Aldridge JP in her continuing struggle with illness.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST – MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT:

There were no declarations.

129.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:

The Minutes of the following committees were submitted for approval.

1. Town Hall Management Committee:

Meeting held on Monday the 9th January, 2017.

2. Town Planning Committee:

Meeting held on Monday the 9th January, 2017.

Minute No: 127 - Consultation before applying for Planning Permission Under Article 2 in respect of a Proposed Household Recycling Centre at Oakenholt:

The Town Clerk reported that had discussed with the clerk of Connahs Quay town Council the prospect of a joint meeting of the two councils to consider this issue. He was however advised that Connahs quay had not received any documentation or the invitation to comment and therefore it was assumed that they were not being consulted! This appeared to members to be unfortunate but perhaps understandable as the application itself related to land in Flint and it was pointed out that Flint had not been a consultee in respect of the Kelsterton crematorium application. There was further discussion about the traffic and environmental impact of the proposal and a question was raised about the provision of notices on the site and the consultation of nearby residents. The Town Clerk therefore suggested that he be given power to act and respond to the consultation incorporating the resolution of the planning committee and the matters raised at this meeting.

3. General Purposes Committee:

Meeting held on Monday the 9th January, 2017.

4. Finance and Policy Committee:

Meeting held on Monday the 9th January, 2017.

RESOLVED:-

1. That the minutes of each of the above committees be approved and adopted

And pursuant to the Planning Committee minutes and the discussion thereon at this meeting

2. That the Town Clerk be given powers to act to respond to the consultation in accordance with the resolution of the Planning committee and issues of site notice, residents notice, environmental impact and traffic impact raised at this meeting.

130.

TO CONSIDER THE BUDGET AND SET THE PRECEPT OF 2017-2018:

The town Clerk circulated his report entitled Council Precept 2017/2018 which he explained set out the background to the issue, the considerations that attached to the exercise and the pressures that the council would face in the financial year before offering a range of options for members to consider. He reminded members that the accounts for 2016/17 up to the 31st December 2016 had been circulated and examined at the last

meeting of the Finance and Policy committee on the 9th January 2017. That consideration confirmed that whilst the council was performing largely on budget there had been unexpected pressures within year which meant that balances would be affected added to that members concurred that there was little scope for acceptable savings to be made from existing budgets. He then examined the pressures that the Council would face in the forthcoming financial year including a potential loss of up to £1500.00. Of the pressures however the greatest was the need to budget for approx. £13,500.00 for the elections in 2017 if all wards were contested. The Council had to accept and provide for the costs of democracy but this meant that members' aspirations for increased services /provision in some areas could not be funded without a double figure increase in precept this was so because there were other pressures that would also have to be met. Whilst these pressures were less in individual amounts and in some case e.g inflation and County increased charges unknowable ,and in the case of others such as pension and minimum wage costs of an altogether smaller order they none the less added up to eat into the very small room to manoeuvre that the budget monitoring exercise had identified . In real terms he felt that the council needed to raise an extra £10.000 from the precept to simply stand still. Growth would only be possible to the extent that any windfall savings could be made from the elections budget in the event of any lack of contest. Even then however there would still be costs associated with the new regime for co-option .He then introduced the options of a 4.95% increase as that had been canvassed at committee and a 5.5% increase which bring £10,081.00 and a 6.0 % increase which would bring in £10,998.00 the report in front of members showed that the increase on a band D property amounted no more than £1.77 or 4.35% at the highest figure given He therefore suggested that members should seriously consider the increase of 6.0% as a final comment he said that in his view a standstill budget of no increase would be to ignore the pressures, deny inflation and abandon aspiration and would in all probability be unsustainable .Members then considered the merits of any increase with Councillor David Cox indicating that he accepted the Town Clerk's advice and he therefore favoured a rise of 6.0% . Councillor Lorna Jones however felt that as the Town Clerk had indicated a need to raise at least £10.000.00 and that an increase of 5.5% would bring in this amount that she would prefer to see the increase limited to 5.5% . A number of members then spoke in favour if each % and Councillor N. Schofield pointed out that in real terms the difference between the two amounts at band D was only 21pence .The Town Mayor said that understood all that members were saying but that he would like to see unanimity in the chamber on such an important matter and invited The Town Clerk to comment. The Town clerk acknowledged the desire for unanimity and that both 5.5% 6.00% increases would bring in the amount he had sought in his report he therefore said that whilst he would obviously like as much as he could get that the difference was not worth prejudicing unanimity. Following that the Town Mayor invited members to consider and upon being moved by Councillor Lorna Jones and seconded by Councillor David Cox it was:-

RESOLVED:-

That the Town Council do increase its precept by 5.5% ,to £193,381.15 for the financial year 2017/2018 and that the Town Clerk and Town Mayor do complete the formalities and notify the County Council accordingly .

131.

TO CONSIDER THE REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS:

The Town Clerk confirmed that the separate documents containing Town Councils Fixed Asset register, Risk Assessment, Health and Safety Policy and Procedures and Financial Regulations had all been circulated to members. He confirmed that since each of these documents had been discussed in committees and were the subject of annual review in any event it was unsurprising that there was little amendment proposed. He drew members' attention to the format of the Asset Register and invited members to confirm that they were happy with both the format and content, in relation to the Risk assessment he confirmed that notwithstanding the existence of disaster recovery insurance and backup arrangements for the electronic documentation more work was needed to codify all routine office contacts and procedures so that in the event of a disaster this could be relied upon by anyone coming fresh to the Council to carry on the work of the Council . This work would be carried out over the next few months with a view to completion by September and thereafter would be stored both on and off site. Members considered the documents as presented and after some discussion it was:-

RESOLVED:-

That each of the documents now presented be approved and adopted and that the Town Clerk and the Town mayor be authorised to sign them in witness thereof