

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee held at the Shire Hall on Wednesday
19th Jan 2003.

Present:

Councillors: Mr. H. Ladd-Lewis (chair) Colin Cooper, David Anthony Jones, David Williams (Mayor), Geraint Price, Ros Bellamy, Colin Jenkins, Sid Burge,

Others: Mr. Towns, Colette Paterson (Town Clerk).

5628; Apologies: None Tendered.

5629: Financial Report: Mr. Towns suggested that all monies should be moved into the No Notice Account as it would be earning a higher rate of interest. The T. Clerk to get authority to move money from General Purpose Account to No Notice Account. The Mayor pointed to the need to look at assigning funding to the various projects for the benefit of the town. Current Financial Statement to be discussed under Other Financial Matters later in the meeting.

5630: Accounts for Payment: 1. **Poppy Appeal Wreath Fund;** Request for payment £15.00 It is previously minuted that the council adds a £10.00 donation to this bill. The Town Clerk will arrange for a cheque for £25.00 to be sent in payment of this account.
2. **M. Rees Electrical Contractor** (Repairs to the Christmas lights donated by Chamber of Trade - query noted as to how and by whom these lights were damaged). Invoice - £91. 06 To be paid from Christmas Lights fund.
3. **Daphne G. Davies** (79 Rhosmaen Street) Letter read to members regarding private electric bill for electricity for Christmas lights. It was moved that the sum is paid and agreed.
It has previously been mooted that the County Council will take responsibility for the Christmas lighting. However, the Town Council will be responsible for the trees and agrees with the letter to decorate one of Mrs Davies trees.

5631: Requests For Financial Assistance. The town Clerk reported on those requests for assistance to date (Namely - **RNLI** - balance sheet provided. **CAB Carmarthen, Menter Bro Dinefwr, Disabled Drivers Association.**) Noted that these are usually referred to the Full Council Meeting in February. However, a letter would be sent to each organisation requesting assistance to say that the requests would be discussed in the Council Meeting in Feb. The letter would also point out that it was the councils usual policy to request a balance sheet from any organisation requesting financial assistance. Any organisation that has not already done so would be asked to supply a

balance sheet before the meeting in February. Mr. Ladd-Lewis agreed to translate said letters.

5632: Other Financial Matters.

1. Christmas Windows. It was previously agreed to award 1st and 2nd prizes for Christmas windows in the town, However, it was agreed there was need to agree an amount. It was initially suggested a £30.00 first prize and £15.00 second prize. Mr. Jenkins said all participants would be given certificates. It was suggested that these amounts were on a par with the amounts been given as donations and that council needed to consider this. It was suggested that the Town Council could give more. It was remarked how successful the windows and the effort put into making them had been and of great benefit to the Town. Mr. Price proposed £50.00 First Prize and £25.00 Second Prize. This was seconded and passed.

2. The Financial Statement. Mr. Towns suggested that members took their copies away for consideration and that the statement was brought up for further consideration at Full Council Meeting Tues 21 Jan 2003.

The mayor asked if there was still any information required for the furthering of the Financial Statement. Mr. Towns said that most was now discovered, the Minutes had been put together and the Agenda Item numbers were now reinstated. These Agenda Item numbers need to run through everything in sequence so that no amendments could be made to minutes without being apparent. The Minute pages also needed to be separately numbered and kept in a sequence so they to cannot be later added to or taken from.

There have been some changes in the manner of audit. There was no longer a district Audit, no longer a requirement to turn up in person for the audit. The Audit sheet provided needed to be completed and only if there was a query or problem would a meeting be requested. This was called a 'lighter touch' approach - simplified and made cheaper. On the basis of the report an Internal Auditor needs to be appointed. Mr. Towns was proposed and seconded as the internal auditor - It was moved that this proposed that this be recommended at Full Council Meeting, and discussion of what remuneration would be appropriate, would take place between Mr. Towns and the Mayor and the Chair.

Discussion then commenced regarding the Financial Statement. It was noted that as the total Income remained below £50 000 a debtors/ creditors statement was no longer a requirement. There would be a need to establish why those items in the current Year's payments and receipts were substantially different from the previous years payments and receipts. The council had outstanding VAT receipts to claim for the current and previous years. Salary Expenses had been increased by the addition of 2hrs extra. The Mayor's expenses had been underpaid by some £550.00 for the previous year and were going to be again. Section 137 payments- the Council is unable to make these payments if no request is received for them. Such requests need to be made and minuted. Llandielo in Bloom had not requested a contribution neither had the Church. It was moved that the Vicar be contacted to provide a request for the maintenance payments. Mr. Burge would approach the Vicar to provide a letter of

application for Church Expenses. It was proposed that in order for the Town Council Finance Committee to establish all payments and budget commitments by the Jan/ Feb Meetings a letter should be drafted and sent out to all those who need to submit requests for payment (e.g. The Church and the Llandeilo in Bloom group.) reminding them to do so. It was then proposed that these letters were sent out in Sept annually, after the Summer recess. This would give time for both the organisations to submit their applications and for Town Council to consider them within the financial year period. This was seconded and approved.

Mr. Towns suggested the existing Budget Meeting be moved from Jan to Dec to give time for preparation for audit. This was proposed by Mr. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Jones.

It was proposed that the Town Council through the Clerk set up a calendar of events. Mr. Towns was volunteered to assist.

The VAT needed to be collated and applied for before March so that is available for audit and for year end statement. It needed to be put into the calendar to ensure that it was done.

A possible question that could be asked at audit is why there was a 16% increase in the Setting of the Precept when the balance of monies increased over the year by £10000.00. It was noted that this money is accounted for in various ways. The redevelopment of the Civic Hall is a large project that has been much discussed over the previous years. This money was being accrued as potential match funding for this project. It was pointed out and noted that this should have been minuted. Another issue that made it necessary to have such reserves is the occupation/ tenancy of the Shire Hall. Should the building remain untenanted for any period of time it would be necessary to have the sum to cover the deficit loss of rental income that would result. It was noted that all these issues regarding the allocation of monies have not been minuted. The £13000.00 unallocated in the previous budget needed to be actually minuted should it be intended for either match-funding, possible property purchase or as a reserve should the Council building become untenanted. In future all Council meetings need to minute all possible allocations of funding, so that they can be tracked at audit. In Mr. Towns report for the audit the existing surplus will be allocated as a reserve contingency fund. The mayor noted that the existing Tenancy agreement ends in 2005 - The process to renegotiate needed to be begun - Mr. Jenkins stated the process had already begun.

It was requested that the Financial Statements were studied and entered as a point of agenda for the Full Council Meeting.

The Council needs to be aware that 5% of Audits are routinely identified for spot checks and 'Honesty is the best policy' as far as past problems are concerned. The Council needed to be open about the problems and issues arising from the past years' finances and needed to state they have been identified and that the Council is trying

to put new systems into operation to ensure the problems are rectified.