

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT & PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE OF
BEAUMARIS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.30 PM IN THE TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: The Town Mayor Councillor G Evans Jones
The Deputy Mayor Councillor F Carr
Councillor I Davies
Councillor M Jones
Councillor C J Theakston
Councillor J P Zalot
Councillor S Zalot

The Town Clerk was in attendance

APOLOGIES: Councillor B L Kotkowicz

Councillor S Zalot took the Chair

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

2.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

2.1 Examination of income and expenditure against budget for 2016/2017

The Town Clerk issued members with the original estimates for income and expenditure as set against financial codes for the year, together with a list of the actual income and expenditure incurred up until 16 November. Generally, it was noted that actual income and expenditure reflected the estimates made. Income for parking tickets on the Green was greater than anticipated, but this reflected a good summer season for visitors coming to the town. Repairs and maintenance costs were lower than expected, but much of this work would be carried out over winter.

The Town Clerk was asked to provide a break-down of administration costs for the Cemetery and Town Hall at the Finance and Planning meeting.

It was proposed and seconded and carried unanimously that staff be congratulated on the accuracy of the estimates and for ensuring the income obtained.

2.2 Audit of Council's accounts

2.2.1 It was proposed and agreed that members audit the income for parking tickets on the Green.

The Green ticket sheets were examined and the starting ticket number and finishing ticket number were noted. The number of tickets sold was multiplied by the £3 charge for parking on the Green. The income for Code 501 was found to be £403 more than anticipated from ticket sales. Upon inspection of the individual entries made for Code 501 it was found that additional sums of

£309 had been taken by operators of the Craft Fair, £81 from a youth regatta and £13 by a member of staff whilst a coin jam was being cleared at the barrier. When these sums were deducted from the total income for Code 501, the amount recorded was equal to that anticipated from the number of tickets sold. The Town Clerk stated that these forms of income in the future would be recorded under Code 503 (Other Income)

Comparison of income from the Green for the same period in 2015 indicated that the income was just slightly up, by about £5,000

2.2.2 Members examined the income for Happy Valley and made a comparison with that obtained for 2015.

The income was slightly down but this reflected poorer weather conditions in 2016.

2.3 Other financial matters

2.3.1 The Town Clerk said he had attended a meeting with other Council Clerks to discuss problems encountered with the 2015-16 Annual Returns.

It was clear that most Councils had encountered problems to the extent that One Voice Wales had made a complaint on behalf of members to the Welsh Audit Office. Several smaller Councils had been criticised for not producing letters of appointment for their Internal Auditor and for the valuation of their long-term assets. This had resulted in many hours of extra work for some of the Clerks, to the extent that they had become distressed and appealed for help from the SLCC. There was a general feeling that the external auditor had been trying hard to find problems, possibly with a view of levying extra charges to Councils. The Town Clerk said that in line with Council's decision, he had passed on his experience with the external auditor to One Voice Wales, with a copy going to the Wales Audit Office. He had made it clear that he totally rejected the suggestion made by the auditor that there had been a lack of financial control over spending and receipt of public money, thus exposing the Council to a risk of overspending. If the auditor had asked for copies of Finance and Planning meeting minutes, this would have been clear.

In relation to the future, it had been suggested that the allocation to Section 137 Donations might become a target, and that money set aside here should not include that which could be spent under other powers, eg Section 137 was not required to make donations to organisations and societies within the town if the purpose of those donations was to benefit the local community.

A further issue that might arise was the reserves held by Councils. As had been done in previous years, these sums of money needed to be allocated to specific projects.

2.3.2 The Town Clerk reported that one of the entry coin boxes at the Public Toilets was broken.

The Town Clerk had found out that the supplier of the coin boxes had purchased them from Germany, but that parts had been made elsewhere in Europe. This had proved to be a long process. A new coin box had been ordered and the damaged one would be sent away to assess whether it could be repaired. If so, it would be retained as a spare.

2.3.3 Members were circulated with Council's Overall Risk Assessment.

This covered the risks associated with areas managed by insurance, and those requiring self-management in relation to the need to keep proper financial records to ensure that the finances were managed correctly.

Members evaluated the Overall Risk Assessment and concluded that it should not be changed.

2.3.4 The Town Clerk advised that he was seeking quotes for Council's insurance for the coming year.

This was proving to be time-consuming but he anticipated having quotes ready for consideration at the next meeting of the Finance and Planning Committee.

Members asked that the level of Public Liability Insurance be checked in relation to that held by other Councils, and to ensure that it would cover any incidents such as the land slip at the Cemetery.

3.0 PERSONNEL MATTERS

3.1 Pay scales/contracts

The Town Clerk said that following the introduction of a new minimum wage, the pay scales recommended for Councils had been revised. The bottom point had been removed, and thus all staff automatically moved to the pay point above. Following this, he had kept the differential in pay points for the different staff members inasmuch that anyone two points above the minimum wage point still remained two points above the new minimum wage point.

Members stated that they felt that Council staff should be paid more because of the high quality of their work.

The press and public were excluded to discuss pay points for individual staff members.

It was noted that the pay points of some staff including the Town Clerk had been determined by a lengthy process of evaluation a few years previous.

Recommendation to the Finance and Planning Committee:

Staff to be given new rates of pay with immediate effect pending a full review of grades and pay scales before April.

3.1.1 The Town Clerk stated that he had drawn up a new Contract of Employment for one member of staff. The meeting approved this contract.

3.2 Automatic enrolment in pension fund

The Town Clerk advised that the Administrative Officer had carried out all of the requirements of the new Pension Scheme that employers were required to introduce. It was noted that most staff who had not already been members were now in the Gwynedd pensions Scheme.

3.3 Other personnel matters

The Town Clerk gave further information on an incident that had taken place at the Green during the late part of the summer, and his need to make the urgent recruitment of an additional member of staff.

The press and public were re-admitted to the meeting.

Members stated their support for the actions taken by the Town Clerk in recruiting an additional member of staff.

Recommendation to the Finance and Planning Committee:

That a sign be placed on the Green Attendants' cabin to advise members of the public that abuse of Council staff would not be tolerated and that any such incidents would be reported immediately to the police. It was noted that signs were already in place to advise that monitoring by CCTV was on-going.