



## **Connah's Quay Town Council**

### **Minutes of Meeting Monday 30 January 2023**

Present: (Attendance Register)

Councillor D. Owen (Chair of Council) presiding

Councillors D. Addaway, J. B. Attridge, L. Attridge, W. Catterall, B. Crease, A. I. Dunbar, A. Dunbobbin, E. S. Faulkner, G. A. Faulkner, R. O'Gorman, R. Mansell, A. Manship, A. R. Owen, D. Richardson, P. Shotton, I. R. Smith, M. White and A. S. Wren.

Mrs S. Wilson (Town Clerk)

#### **69. Notice of Meeting**

The notice of meeting was received.

#### **70. Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor A. Hughes.

#### **71. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor A. S. Wren declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Item 7 – Cambrian Aquatics

Councillor A. I. Dunbar declared a personal interest in Item 5(d) – Finance & General Purposes – 4 January 2023 – CQ & Shotton Interservices.

#### **72. Urgent Item – Cambrian Aquatics**

Councillor R. O'Gorman arrived during the next item.

Councillor A. Wren left the meeting due to a personal and prejudicial interest.

The Leader of the Council asked the Chair if due to a disability could he remain seated when addressing Council and the Chair.

The Chair agreed this request.

The Leader of the Council explained how Cambrian Aquatics was set up in 2016 as a Community Asset Transfer from Flintshire County Council. When Cambrian Aquatics were first set up Connah's Quay Town Council gave a contribution to them of £15k. Due to the rise of cost of living with energy prices etc Councillor Attridge is recommending that the Town Council contributes £2500 for this financial year which will help in keeping the pool open for the residents and people of Connah's Quay. The Town Council can re-address any future contributions as part of the Youth Engagement Programme budget at a later date. Any requests would be put before Council for approval.

Councillor A. Dunbobbin stated he agrees with the request from Councillor Attridge as the swimming pool was built there to dis-encourage people not to swim in the river after local death tragedies and should remain open and operational.

Councillor P. Shotton stated that in 2016 when the Community Asset Transfer occurred between Cambrian Aquatics and Flintshire County Council the Town Council contributed £15k and FCC £65k. Due to recent prices increases of the running of the swimming pool it is important that the Council assist in keeping the pool open.

Councillors voted on the Leader of the Council's proposal to contribute £2500 in this financial year.

All Councillors voted and agreed with the proposal.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk actions the contribution to Cambrian Aquatics and this be agreed as a S.137 expenditure.

Councillor A. Wren returned to the meeting

### **73. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2022 were received, approved and agreed as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes are approved as a correct and accurate record.

## 74. Committee Reports

Councillor A. Dunbobbin requested he remain seated when addressing Council or the Chair due to a disability.

The Chair agreed this request.

### a) Declarations of Interest – 19 December 2023

That the following Councillor name be changed from Councillor A. I. Dunbar to Councillor A. Dunbobbin

RESOLVED:

That (a) be approved as a correct and accurate record subject to the above amendment.

### b) Consultative Meeting – 4 January 2023

### c) Planning Meeting – 4 January 2023

RESOLVED:

That (b) & (c) be approved as a correct and accurate record.

### d) Finance & General Purposes Committee – 4 January 2023

Councillor A. I. Dunbar stated that the apology made to Councillor Crease was not for his outburst but for not addressing him as Chair (page 35).

Councillor Dunbar also stated that the comments made by Councillor Attridge concerning phone calls to Councillor Bibby and the President were untrue and should be retracted (page 36).

Council agreed that the minutes are a true record of the comment Councillor Attridge made and would remain. Clarification would be sought from the President of Interservices in checking the accuracy of the comment.

That (d) be approved as a correct record.

### e) Recreation & Entertainments Committee – 4 January 2023

### f) Declarations of Interest – 4 January 2023

RESOLVED:

That reports (e) and (f) be approved and adopted as a correct and accurate record.

### g) Policy & Resources Committee – 24 January 2023

The Leader of the Council thanked the Clerk for the work undertaken in providing all the policies. He also thanked all Members and the CWU Rep for ensuring accuracy of the policies.

Councillor A. Dunbobbin stated that it was recommended that as part of the Annual Report that the Standing Committees and outside bodies be listed with the relevant Councillor.

Councillor Dunbobbin commented that the following procedures and regulations had been recommended for approval at the meeting on the 24 January 2023 but were not listed in the minutes:

Internal Financial Controls,

Annual Investment Strategy

Financial Risk Assessment

Financial Regulations

Annual Report

Role Description of Chair

Role Description of Councillor

The Clerk apologised for omitting these from the minutes.

RESOLVED:

That report (g) be approved and adopted with the amendment to the Annual Report and that all the Procedures listed above are correct and approved and included in the minutes.

h) Special Meeting of Finance & General Purposes Committee – 24 January 2023

The Leader of the Council explained how a 7.4% increase in precept had been recommended. This is not 7.4% on the whole council tax bill but 7.4% on the Town Council's precept. He fully appreciates the current cost of living crisis and how difficult the increase will be for residents but with this increase the town and residents will benefit with more monies being available for the 'youth engagement programme'. Residents who are most vulnerable will have help from FCC with their council tax, either paid in full or part of.

Having this increase will allow for the Town Council to have reserves in the following years.

Councillor B. Crease thanked the Clerk for the work undertaken on the budget and emphasised that with setting this balanced budget the community of Connah's Quay will benefit.

Councillor A. Dunbobbin commented that as standing orders had been suspended he and his fellow Labour Councillors were not completely satisfied with agreeing a budget with no standing orders in place.

The Clerk read the following to Councillors:

'The model standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer'.

Councillor Dunbobbin response was that he was pleased the Financial Regulations had been approved earlier in the meeting.

Thanks were passed to Councillor Dunbobbin in noticing that the recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting for the Financial Regulations had been omitted.

Councillor Dunbar commented that the precept figure of 7.4% had been the highest he had ever known and this wasn't what the residents voted for, he was disgusted the residents of Connah's Quay had not been taken into consideration when recommending these figures.

Councillor Attridge called a 'point of order' and again explained that the increase was for the benefit of the community of Connah's Quay. If the Town Council had healthy reserves this increase would not have had to be recommended.

Councillor Dunbar asked the Chair why he had been interrupted from speaking and why other Councillors aren't interrupted.

Councillor Attridge stated he had called a 'point of order' which has to be heard first and foremost.

Councillor Crease explained how it had been a challenging year with no school milk rebate claims, covid and there being little precept increases in the last few years.

Councillor R. O'Gorman stated he had sat and listened to both sides of the discussion and felt that it was time for the pettiness to stop and for Councillors to realise they are here for the benefit of the town and need to all work together.

The Chair asked Members to vote on the recommendation from the Special Finance & General Purposes meeting that the Town Council precept be set at £388,806 – Band D charge of £62.39 per annum – an increase of £4.29 per household. This equates to 7.4% increase for 2023-24.

It was agreed that this be a recorded vote and included in the minutes.

The Chair asked the Clerk to address the Members for their vote.

The following was recorded:

**In favour**

Councillor D. Addaway

Councillor B. Attridge

Councillor L. Attridge

Councillor B. Crease

Councillor R. Mansell

Councillor A. Manship

Councillor A. Owen

Councillor D. Owen

Councillor D. Richardson

Councillor A. Wren

**Abstained:**

Councillor W. Catterall

Councillor I. Dunbar

Councillor A. Dunbobbin

Councillor E. Faulkner

Councillor G. Faulkner

Councillor R. O’Gorman

Councillor P. Shotton

Councillor I. Smith

Councillor M. White

The Clerk confirmed to Councillors that 10 were in favour and 9 abstained.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Town Council precept be set at £388,806 – Band D charge of £62.39 per annum – an increase of £4.29 per household. This equates to 7.4% increase for 2023-24.

**75. Accounts**

The Accounts for the month of January 2023 with expenditure total of £27,290.95 were approved for payment as per schedule.

Councillor Dunbar asked why only two schools had been paid for school milk for December when there are four primary schools in the town.

The Clerk responded by informing Councillors that the relevant paperwork had not been received from the other schools.

Councillor Dunbar informed Council he had spoken with Wepre School to ask if they still required the free school milk. They will let the Council know in due course of their decision. The Clerk thanked Councillor Dunbar for speaking to the school and will wait for the schools response and inform Council of the outcome.

Confirmed 27 February 2023

Presiding Chair

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and ended at 7.15pm.