



Minutes of the meeting of Rhuddlan Town Council held at Community Centre, Parliament Street, Rhuddlan, on Thursday 24th January 2019.

Present:

Cllr Gareth Rowlands (Mayor in the Chair)
Cllr Mike Kermode
Cllr Ann Davies
Cllr Arwel Roberts
Cllr Gareth Smith
Cllr Heather Ellis
Cllr Mike Elgin
Town Clerk.

1. Apologies:

Cllr Reg Davies
Cllr Syd Gaskin
Cllr Andy Smith
Cllr Jackie Burnham

2. Declaration of Interests: None

3. Urgent Matters: None

4. Personnel Committee – 15th January

Cllr Gareth Rowlands asks Cllr Mike Kermode to give the report of Personnel Committee as the Chair of the Personnel Committee, Cllr Andy Smith is not present.

Cllr Mike Kermode corrects an error on page 3 of Personnel Committee minutes. It should read “To employ a part-time Minute Clerk for 8 hours per month” (not 8 hours per week).

Cllr Mike Kermode gives a summary of the minutes and the 3 options:

1. To have a minute Clerk on self-employed basis costing £75 per month
2. To employ a part-time Clerk for 8 hours per month at a cost of £1,500 per annum
3. To employ a Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk for 5 hours per week at a cost of £3,600 per annum.

The Personnel Committee feels that a Clerical/Minute Clerk on 5 hours per week is best but recommends a Minute Clerk 8 hours per month as first step. Cllr Gareth Rowlands reminds that the Town Council employed an Assistant to the Clerk when he first joined the Council many years ago.

Cllr Gareth Smith feels positive about supporting the Personnel Committee's recommendation but needs more factual information regarding the Town Clerks work load/time.

The Town Clerk provides information from her monthly timesheets which shows she is regularly working in excess of 82 hours per month. She also says that the volume of cheques have gone up from 81 to over 200 in past 3 years. Many of those cheques has a background workload e.g. compile a report to the Town Council, seeking quotes, on-site meetings, grant applications etc.

Cllr Mike Elgin asked some questions about workload and pressures to which the Town Clerk provided information in response. The website workload is something that will be looked at later in the year

Cllr Ann Davies feels more information is needed about workload and extra hours and says we should compare to similar sized Councils like Ruthin. Cllr Mike Kermode says he hopes that the Town Clerks statements about timesheets/workload is adequate information. It's not the size of Council that's important, it's the volume of work that's put on the Clerk. Rhuddlan Town Council is now a very active Council and this generates extra workload.

Cllr Mike Kermode **proposed** that the Council employs a Clerical/Minute Clerk at 5 hours per week. This is **seconded** by Cllr Arwel Roberts. Cllr Ann Davies **proposes an amendment** that no action is taken until more information is provided to Council regarding workload/extra hours. This is **seconded** by Cllr Mike Elgin.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands says he is not sure what additional information can be given. The Clerk has provided clear picture of hours from her time-sheets and the volume of cheques being processed.

The vote on the amendment, it's lost 4 to 2. Cllr Mike Elgin abstained.

The vote on Cllr Mike Kermode's proposal - it's carried 5 to 2.

5. Setting of Precept For Rhuddlan 2019/20

Councillors discussed a report from the Town Clerk that set out the information required for setting of the budget and precept for 2019-20. **Appendix A** outlines the changes and reasons given.

The outcome of the discussion was to give a net Revenue Budget for 2019 – 20 of £127,550 and this was agreed by the Council.

A proposal was put forward that £35,000 of the balances should be used, particularly in light of recent comments by the Welsh Audit Office stating that councils are sat on growing financial reserves. By using the £35,000 out of balances, this would result in the precept for 2019/20 be set at £92,150, giving a precept of £50.96 per household. **It was resolved** to agree to this proposal.

