

16 January, 2013.

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 366 – 371

At a Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 16 January 2013, at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. D. M. Cundy (Chairman)

Cllrs.

L. A. Beer	R. E. Evans
M. V. Davies	S. N. Lewis
H. J. Evans	A. G. Morgan
W. V. Thomas	

366. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. T. Devichand, S. M. Donoghue, G. N. R. Edwards and T. J. Jones (Cllr. R. E. Evans deputising).

367. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

**368. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES
ANNUAL REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 187, Members received correspondence from the Secretariat, Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, stating the Panel's Annual Report dated December 2012, which sets the payment to elected Members for the financial year 2013/14 had now been published.

Members' attention was drawn to section 3 of the report wherein it stated that the Panel in its Annual Report (December 2011) noted that it would require a considerable investment in time and effort to extend its framework to include community and town councils. The Panel wanted to ensure that any decisions made in respect of these councils were fair and equitable and would have proper regard for the variation across the 735 councils in Wales. To that end it would continue with its programme of evidence gathering as it was clear there was considerable variation in the functions and responsibilities across councils and therefore in the role of individual members. However, the information already obtained had allowed the Panel to make some initial determinations as follows:

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Determination (7) Each community and town council is permitted to make a payment to its members of a maximum amount of £100 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc

Determination (8) Community and town councils may continue to make payments to their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties outside the area of the council. Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowance as below:

- 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year;
- 25p per mile over 10,000 miles;
- 5p per passenger per mile – passenger supplement;
- 24p per mile for private motor cycles;
- 20p per mile for bicycles.

Determination (9) Community and town councils may continue to reimburse subsistence expenses to their members for attending approved duties outside the area of the council at the maximum rates set out below on the basis of receipted claims:

- £28 per day allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided in the overnight;
- £150 – London overnight;
- £120 – Cardiff overnight;
- £ 95 – elsewhere;
- £ 25 – overnight stay with friends/family.

Determination (10) Community and town councils may continue to pay an Attendance Allowance to their members for attending approved duties outside of the council as follows:

- £16.23 for a period not exceeding 4 hours;
- £32.46 for a period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours.

Determination (11) Community and town councils may continue to pay a Financial Loss Allowance to each of their members where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties outside the area of the council as follows:

- £30.05 for a period not exceeding 4 hours;
- £60.11 for a period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours;
- £60.11 plus such amount as is payable under (a) and (b) above as appropriate for a period.

Determination (12) Community and town councils are authorised to provide a Civic Allowance to the Mayor/Chair and Deputy Mayor/Chair of the council of an amount that each council deems appropriate to undertake the functions of that office.

Determination (13) The Panel's Regulations relating to community and town councils replace the Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of Community Council)(Wales) Regulations 2003 that will be revoked at midnight on 31 March 2013.

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Members were informed that for the avoidance of doubt, determinations 7 to 12 were permissive powers that required a formal decision by each community or town council. However, where a community and town council makes such a decision, the decision must apply to all its members at the amounts determined by the Panel. An individual member may make a personal decision to elect to forgo part or all of the entitlement to any of these allowances by giving notice in writing to the proper office of the council.

Following discussion whereby Members expressed concern that the specified sums allocated to certain allowance payments would place an additional cost burden on the Council's general budget it was

RESOLVED that the initial allowance rates set by the Remuneration Panel be received and adopted with them taking effect from 1 April, 2013.

**369. CONSULTATION ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
(DEMOCRACY) (WALES) BILL**

Members considered correspondence received from the National Assembly for Wales' Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee which called for evidence on the general principles of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill.

The Bill sought to achieve:

- reform of the organisation and functions of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales;
- amendments to the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in relation to the responsibilities of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and the structure of local authority audit committees;
- provisions concerning public access to information concerning town and community councils;
- amendments to Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 to facilitate the creation by local authorities of joint standards committees;
- provision concerning the role of the Chairman or Mayor of principal councils; and
- recasting and consolidating existing local government provisions in relation to the Boundary Commission and therefore progresses the development of a Welsh Statute Book.

In briefing Members on how best to frame a response to the consultation exercise the Clerk referred to the Explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Bill. He stated it was appropriate to focus attention on the provisions in so far as the proposed arrangements affected the Town and Community Council sector. In this respect it was proposed that every Town and Community Council should by May 2015, provide their contact and membership details and records of their proceedings via the internet. In addition the Clerk, as a minimum, should be contactable by email. The Bill did not require each Town or Community Council to have its own website. In many cases it might be possible for the local principal council or a membership organisation such as One Voice Wales to host the website. The Bill also provided for the Welsh Government to issue guidance on this matter.

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The Clerk also referred in general terms to the other elements of the Bill but these did not directly impact upon the Town and Community Council sector but included matters such as the timing, call for and delivery of community boundary reviews. He stated the Council ought to focus its response by not completing the consultation questionnaire in full rather it should focus on the specific questions as to whether it agreed that the provisions relating to improving access to information for the Town and Community Council was appropriate.

Following discussion during which Members supported the Bill's provisions in so far as the proposed arrangements affected the Town and Community Council sector it was

RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to respond to the consultation exercise articulating Members view and observations accordingly.

370. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the following matter be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

371. STAFFING MATTERS

Members considered the report of the Deputy Clerk (Administration) informing of staffing matters.

RESOLVED that the report referenced 1/2013 be accepted.

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The meeting concluded at 5:15 p.m.

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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 12 February, 2013, adopted by the Council.