

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE COMMITTEE OF FEATHERSTONE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, OLD TOWN HALL, FEATHERSTONE ON 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014 AT 10.30AM**

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**Present:** Councillor M Isherwood (Chair) Councillor Power (Mayor), Councillor W Mulroe, Councillor R Taylor (11am) Councillor G Isherwood (11am) and Councillor M Tennant-King

**In Attendance:** Sue Coles (Town Clerk) Councillor Wright, Councillor S Vickers

**17/14 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor M Isherwood was proposed by Councillor Power and seconded by Councillor M Tennant-King it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor M Isherwood be appointed Chair of the Committee.

**18/14 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Councillor M Isherwood welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were received from Councillor D Stapleton.

**19/14 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor J Power was proposed by Councillor Tennant-King and seconded by Councillor M Isherwood it was

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Power be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee.

It was also agreed that Councillor M Tennant-King would be Chairman of the Grants Sub-Committee.

**20/14 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None were received.

**21/14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no member of the public in attendance.

**22/14 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

**RESOLVED:** under the terms of the public bodies admission to meetings act that the press and public be excluded from any items relating to Staff Matters and Newsletter Publishing Costs plus at any part of the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business being transacted.

**23/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Due to the Council meetings taking place six weekly each Committee will approve its own minutes and they will also be presented to the next full Council meeting. Members noted.

**24/14 LOCAL COUNCIL ADVISORY SERVICE SEMINARS**

A LCAS seminar is to be held at South Kirby on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September. It was suggested that the Town Clerk attend. The topics under discussion are Managing Volunteers, Social Media Risks, H&S and reviewing recent local council accidents and claims.

**RESOLVED:** Members approved the Town Clerk's attendance.

**25/14 SLCC REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014**

The 2014 Regional Conference is to take place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at York.

**RESOLVED** Members approved the Town Clerk's attendance at a cost of £69.00.

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**26/14 TAX CUT FOR NIC CONTRIBUTIONS**

Further information was received concerning David Cameron's announcement to encourage the employment of new staff. This incentive started on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and pertains to the employment of new staff that will be paying NIC and Tax from that date. Therefore this incentive does not apply to the Town Council. Members noted.

**27/14 TWINNING**

Contact has now been made with the Clerks of three Welsh towns; Blaenavon Town Council, Coed y Cwm Community Council and Tredegar Town Council all of whom would like information as to how we vision the Twinning connections. In the first instance they have been assured that Featherstone Town Council wishes only to hold reciprocal visits to see how other towns have coped after the loss of coal mining in their areas and perhaps enjoy a rugby game together. They have been informed that we are keen to keep in touch with our mining heritage; and to this end we sponsor's local school visits to the National Coal Mining Museum.

Councillor Mulroe asked as to how this item had been brought forward and it was explained that the Heritage & Culture Committee now dissolved had raised this item in January 2014. Councillor G Isherwood said that our Featherstone's heritage was from Staffordshire. He was totally opposed to any expenditure but in principle he supports the idea. The Chairman advised that it may benefit the children if they wished to communicate with a Welsh Town through 'pen pals' and business may benefit by reciprocal community visits.

Councillor Vickers said he saw it as enabling a connection with choirs and schools. But any invitations would have to be paid out of members pockets. Promoting our contact with the Mining Museum's with school links was a good idea. Councillor M Tennant-King said that any councillor and residents calling into the one of the Welsh towns on a journey would be a good idea to establish friendship links.

Blaenavon Town Council has already expressed an interest if there were no costs to the Council and the Clerk which was also echoed by the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council will formally write to Blaenavon Town Council settling out ways in which a 'Twinning' connection could be established at no cost to either Council.

**28/14 END OF YEAR REPORTS AND INTEREST RATES.**

End of Year Reports were submitted to the Committee prior to the full Council Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June. Discussion ensued regarding the balances on the bank accounts, and variances on the end of year balances from 2013.

Councillor Mulroe asked the Committee that under Blooming Featherstone Budget 2014 there was already a concern about the cost of replanting four very large planters which had been dormant for several years and he asked that the Market and Blooming Featherstone Committee be able to authorise the planting.

It was

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That further leafleting to promote free of charge trading on the market take place. That the extra expenditure of £1,000 is added to the budget and that both matters are referred to the next Markets and Blooming Featherstone Committee meeting in June.
- b) That the balances of all the bank accounts are noted and that the interest rates and financial situation of the Co-op bank be monitored.

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**29/14 MEMBER'S INTERNAL AUDIT**

Since it is an auditing requirement that all Councils review the effectiveness of the internal audit a report on the last review dated 25<sup>th</sup> April 2013 was attached to the agenda. It was

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors M Isherwood and Power set a date for 2014 review.

**30/14 FINANCE REPORTS**

- a. List of Accounts for Payment totalling £778.70 was given to the meeting.
- b. List of Income totalling £1,120.90 was given at the meeting.
- c. List of Direct Debit payments was also given to the meeting.

It was

**RESOLVED:** That all payments and direct debits are approved and income noted.

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

**31/14 NEWSLETTER**

A draft copy of the June 2014 newsletter was presented to the Committee for approval with the costings from three companies to print the edition for the forthcoming year. A suggested new delivery method of poly-bagging the edition, as suggested by Platinum, was discussed but it was thought it would not make any difference to the total readership of the copy. Councillor Mulroe said that Members should support the local business of the town and requested that the white envelope previously use was printed with Featherstone Town Council and Town Gala. Councillor Vickers said that best value is the one that reaches the most people of the town. Agreement was needed at the meeting in order for the copy to be delivered mid-June in time for the Gala.

Members thanked Mrs Symons for her hard work compiling the Newsletter for the first time.

It was

**RESOLVED:** That the contract be awarded to DM Print at a cost of £1,266.24.

**32/14 STAFFING MATTERS**

A verbal report was made to the meeting concerning staff holidays and sickness absence. The appraisal of the Administration Assistant will be conducted in June. Members noted.

**Closure:** The meeting closed at 12.10am