



## **MINUTES**

**of the Quarterly Meeting of the Association held on  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 10.30am Civic Halls, Connah's Quay**

### **Present were:**

Cllr Ian Hodge chair	Holywell Town Council
Cllr Haydn Bateman	Northrop Community Council
Cllr Vivienne Blondek	Buckley Town Council
Cllr Lynette Edwards	Caerswys Community Council
Cllr Veronica Gay	Broughton Town Council
Cllr Chrissy Gee	Broughton Town Council
Cllr Patrick Heesam	Mostyn Community Council
Cllr Alan James	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Bernise McLoughlin	Towyn and Kinmell Bay Town Council
Cllr Peter Morton	St Asaph City Council
Gareth Nickels	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Allun Owen	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr D Owen	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Ted Palmer	Holywell Town Council
Susanne Wilson	Connah's Quay Town Council
Robert Robinson Secretary	Llanfair Caereinion Town Council

### **By zoom:**

Cllr Michael Davies	Beaumaris Town Council
Cllr Paul Fletcher	Abergele Town Council

### **Apologies received:**

Nigel Allcott	Prestatyn Town Council
Cllr S Beach	Ruthin Town Council
Cllr Joan Butterfield President	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr J Chamberlain Jones	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Norma Davies	Flint Town Council
Cllr Lynda Griffiths	Towyn and Kinmell Bay Town Council
Cllr Rob Mansell	
Cllr J Oakes	Ruthin Town Council
Cllr Gwynfor Owen	
Cllr H Pearce	Llandudno
Cllr Rathbone	Buckley Town Council



Cllr Helen Roberts	Conwy Town Council
Cllr Shirley Jones Roberts	Abergele Town Council
Cllr Chamberlain Jones	Rhyl Town Council
Cllr Jackie Webster	Conwy Town Council
Cllr Adrian West	Prestatyn Town Council
Cllr Andrew Wood	Prestatyn Town Council

### **1. Welcome**

The meeting received a welcome from the Chair to the meeting.

The meeting received a welcome from the Deputy Mayor Cllr D Owen of Connah's Quay Town Council.

### **2. Minutes of the last Quarterly Meeting**

The meeting considered and approved the minutes of the last meeting held in April 2024.

### **3. Visiting speaker**

The meeting received a presentation from Liz Grieve (Denbighshire County Council) regarding future service delivery and in particular libraries. A copy of the slides is issued with this agenda.

The main points of note were:

#### **General library information**

- i) There are no plans to close any further libraries in Denbighshire at this time. No guarantees were given about what might happen post April 2025.
- ii) Denbighshire has 95,000 residents and which 25% speak Welsh. iii) Pockets of wealth but also areas of severe poverty.
- iv) The importance of libraries was stressed. v) Lots of events take place in libraries.
- vi) Free access to computers. vii) There is a duty to provide libraries under the public libraries and museums act 1964.
- viii) You can now borrow books online.
- ix) Each library is calculated to bring £7 per head to the local community economy.
- x) Libraries are often designated safe places and or warm hubs.



### **Other information**

- a) County Councils have seen approx. a 37% increase in Social Care budgets.
- b) Funding for County Councils is made up of 13% business rates, 61% Welsh Government grant and the remainder from Council Tax.
- c) Spending is approx. 1/3 education and 1/3 social care, the remainder covers all other aspects of the council expenditure.
- d) There is to be a reduction in Welsh Government funding over the next 3 years year on year.
- e) There are more service cuts to come with the following at risk in all authorities unless others come forward to take over the services which include:

Allotments

Litter bins

Street cleaning

Youthwork

Community centres

Community transport

Car parks

Heritage

Open spaces and parks

Public toilets

Tourism

Leisure services

### **Way forward for libraries in future**

There has to be a more sustainable way forward for libraries:

- i) Maybe with community libraries with volunteers.
- ii) By local councils paying towards their library.
- iii) Cuts in hours of the provision.

The bottom line message was 'there are severe cuts in services to come over the coming years.'

The meeting thanked Liz Grieve for her presentation and time.



#### 4. Actions taken from the last meeting

The meeting noted the actions from the last meeting as set out below:

Ref	Activity	Status
1	Publish and circulate minutes of the meeting.	Completed
2	Write a letter to Welsh Government on the consultation set out in minute no 12.	Completed
3	Write to Flintshire Council regarding libraries.	Completed
4	Circulate presentation on recycling to members.	Completed
5	Arrange the meeting with Welsh Government on transport.	Now arranged
6	Executive to consider a paper on the homeless project.	A speaker is to be invited to the October meeting
7	Rail meetings to consider items raised regarding Llandudno Station, Deganwy crossing and Prestatyn footbridge.	Update given to rail meeting
8	Report from the boundary commission on Ceredigion to be considered in detail by the Executive with a report back.	No further news

#### 5. Executive

The meeting noted the executive meeting minutes from the meeting held in June 2024.

#### 6. Transport update

The meeting received a short report recent meetings with Transport for Wales.

#### 7. Homeless project

Cllr Lynette Edwards gave a short resume on the work being done to tackle the homeless issues. A speaker was due to be at this meeting but was not able to come at the last minute. It is hoped that they will attend the October meeting.



## **8. Boundary Commission report**

There was nothing to report at this stage.

## **9. Future delivery of services by county councils**

The meeting considered the approach by County Councils regarding some future services due to funding restrictions.

The passing over of more services to Town and Community Councils will mean larger budgets which could impact on the VAT status of those using partial exemption (a scheme for smaller councils).

An outline of the scheme is to be sent to all Council Clerks for information. The basis details of the scheme are:

### **Your guide to understanding VAT recovery as a local authority or other public body**

Local authorities and other public bodies covered by section 33 of the 1994 VAT Act can recover VAT incurred on costs associated with:

- non-business activities,
- taxable business activities where the body is VAT registered (subject to the normal rules), and
- exempt business activities (where the input tax incurred in relation to exempt activities is considered to be insignificant).

The insignificant amount is tested using a calculation called the section 33 recovery model, more commonly referred to as the partial exemption calculation.

This calculation is crucial to ensuring your public body can monitor and, where possible, mitigate the amount of irrecoverable VAT.

Here, we will help you understand the importance of the partial exemption and how to prepare for the calculation.

### **How to treat VAT incurred**

Normally, businesses and other organisations that only make exempt or non-business activities cannot recover VAT incurred on costs associated with these activities. However, special VAT recovery rules apply to section 33 public bodies that enable VAT to be recovered as below.



## **Non-business activities**

The section 33 partial exemption calculation enables public bodies to obtain a refund of VAT incurred related to non-business activities.

A public body can recover the VAT it incurs on its non-business activities only if it:

- Places the order
- Receives the supply
- Receives a tax invoice addressed to it
- Pays from its own funds (including funds awarded to it).
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## **Taxable business supplies**

A public body registered for VAT can recover VAT incurred on purchases used for taxable business purposes (subject to the normal rules).

The body must demonstrate its entitlement to any VAT claimed, although it is not required to distinguish between VAT attributable to business and non-business activities.

## **Exempt business supplies**

Public bodies can recover VAT incurred on exempt supplies, where this is calculated to be an insignificant proportion of the total VAT incurred.

## **The insignificance test**

Exempt input tax is considered insignificant and recoverable if it is less than one of the following:

- £7,500 per annum, or
- 5% of the total VAT incurred on all purchases in a year.

If the VAT reclaim is more than £7,500 in one year no VAT can be reclaimed in that year.

If in a year more than £7,500 is claimed there is an averaging scheme available over a number of years.

The meeting **AGREED** that the secretary should write to the appropriate government departments to seek an increase in the £7,500 limit. This limit has been the same for over 20 years.



### **10. Bill (Welsh Government Elections)**

To The meeting considered the Welsh Government proposals regarding the lists for the next elections with particular reference to gender.

It was **AGREED** that the Association would put forward the view as follows:

- i) The idea of gender restrictions on electoral lists for the next election is wrong and the list should include the best people for the job without reference to gender.
- ii) This also removes any debate around what gender means.

The secretary is to pass these views onto the Welsh Government.

### **11. Clarification on Welsh Government Members activities**

The meeting **AGREED** that the secretary should write to the Welsh Government seeking clarification around whether members (who are paid) are using Welsh Government time for electioneering for the National Government. The secretary will report back to the next meeting.

### **12. Date of next meeting**

To note the date of the next meeting on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 10.30am at Towyn and Kinmell Bay.