



# MINUTES

Of the Quarterly Meeting of the Association held on  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015 at 10.30am at Flint Town Hall

## Welcome by Mayor of Flint Town Council

The meeting was welcomed by Cllr Terry Renshaw Mayor of Flint Town Council.

## The record of attendance is:

Council	Present	Apologies
<b>Officers</b>	Cllr B C Roberts (Vice Chair) Robert Robinson (Secretary & Treasurer) Cllr Joan Butterfield (President)	Cllr Eve Butler (Chair)
<b>ABERGELE TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr R Waters	Cllr John A MacLennan
<b>ARGOED COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>	R Hampton Jones Cllr J Taylor Cllr J Holiday	
<b>BANGOR CITY COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Derek Hainge	
<b>BAGILLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>		Cllr C R Williams
<b>BAY OF COLWYN TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Mrs H Meredith	Tina Earley Clerk Cllr Lindsay Griffiths Cllr Mrs Roy
<b>BUCKLEY TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr A Woolley	Cllr J Woolley Cllr A Williams
<b>CAERWYS TOWN COUNCIL</b>		Cllr J Webb
<b>CAIA PARK COMMUNITY CONCIL</b>		
<b>CONNAH'S QUAY TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr P Attridge Cllr R Hill Cllr C Grainger S Goodrum (Clerk)	
<b>CONWY TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr H Roberts Cllr R Parker	
<b>DENBIGH TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr R Bartley	
<b>FLINT TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Terry Renshaw Cllr David Cox A Loveridge Town Clerk	Cllr L Jones

<b>HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>		
<b>HOLYWELL TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr P York Cllr P Curtiss Delores Phelan (visitor)	C Pierce Clerk Cllr Karin Davies
<b>LLANDUDNO TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr B Bertola	Cllr T Davie
<b>LLANASA TOWN COUNCIL</b>		
<b>LLANFAIRFECHAN TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr C Gell	
<b>LLANDRINO &amp; ARDLEEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>		C Davies (Clerk)
<b>LLANDYSILIO COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>		C Davies (Clerk) Cllr Frances Buckingham
<b>LLANGOLLEN TOWN COUNCIL</b>		
<b>MENAI BRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr D M Davies Mayor	Cllr H Hunt
<b>PENMAENMAWR TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr M Baines	
<b>PRESTATYN TOWN COUNCIL</b>	N Acott Clerk	Cllr J Szabo Cllr J McLennan
<b>RHUDDLAN TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr M Kermode	Cllr J T Jones
<b>RHYL TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr J Chamberlain-Jones	G Nickels Clerk Cllr D Simmons
<b>RUTHIN TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr A Roberts	Cllr E Wynnie
<b>SHOTTON TOWN COUNCIL</b>		
<b>ST ASAPH CITY COUNCIL</b>		
<b>TOWYN AND KINMELL BAY TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr B McLaughlin	Cllr M Roberts Cllr K Stone Mrs H Parkes Clerk
<b>WELSHPOOL TOWN COUNCIL</b>	Cllr Estelle Bleivas	Cllr Ann Holloway Cllr Hazel Evans

### **1. Notice of the meeting**

The meeting accepted the notice of the meeting.

### **2. Attendance**

The register of attendance was circulated and completed.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

The meeting approved the Minutes of the quarterly meeting held in July 2015.

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

The secretary reported on actions taken since the last meeting:

- a) Accounts were issued to the auditors.
- b) Administration charges were considered at AGM
- c) Marketing leaflets distribution has been completed
- d) The papers were completed for the consultation on Local Government and were Post on web site and were ready for discussion at the meeting.

#### 5. Financial Report

The meeting consider the financial report issued with the agenda.

#### 6. Executive

The meeting considered the minutes of the Executive Meeting attached to the agenda.

The meeting **AGREED** that the secretary should write to all Clerks reminding them of the retirement from the secretariat by R A Robinson in July 2015.

#### 7. Council tax

The meeting considered the paper on a Council Tax consultation as per attached to the agenda.

The following comments were noted:

- a) Any system has to be fair.
- b) Any system should include the student population in any calculations.
- c) An income based system is a fairer system.
- d) Monitoring the council tax increases at County level needs to be actioned.
- e) The fixed single payment system of Council Tax is an issue.
- f) Move away from grant based effects on Council Tax.
- g) Any system should take into account those with two homes.

The meeting **AGREED** the following:

'The secretary should respond to the consultation recommending an individual income based option for Council Tax.'

There was a vote of 9 to 4 to support the above.

#### 8. Conference and Annual Meeting 2016

The meeting considered a plan for a Conference Style layout of the AGM for 2016. as per the paper attached to the agenda.

The meeting **VOTED** on the options put forward as follows:

Option 1 – Leave AGM as it is now.	0 Votes
Option 2 – AGM with 2 speakers	4 votes
Option 3 – AGM with single speaker and debate.	16 votes
Option 4 – AGM with workshops.	9 votes.

The meeting **AGREED** to adopt option 3.

## **9. Local Government Review and meeting with Welsh Government**

The meeting considered various aspects of the Local Government review as follows:

### **a)The enclosed document for presentation to the Ministers Office regarding Town and Community Councils as per appendix F to the agenda.**

The paper was **AGREED** and is to be sent to the Minister.

A meeting with the Minister is to be arranged with the President, Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary present.

### **b)The report on the Boundary Commission and new County Council Wards for the new County Councils proposed.**

The meeting considered the consultation with the following comments being put forward:

- a) New wards should be population based and not just electorate.
- b) New wards of 1:4,000 was considered too big.
- c) Naming of wards should be by the local communities.

The secretary is to prepare a response and publish it on the web site for comments before it is sent off to the Commission.

### **c)The report on the new 'Well-being of future generations Act 2015) and the basic information issued to date.**

The secretary explained the proposed changes to the Power of Well Being and the meeting noted the following:

- i) The real effect is on Councils with a budget of £200k or more.
- ii) The effect after this level is that there will be duty on Town and Community Councils with regards to any plans approved by the County Council.
- iii) There is a need for Town and Community Councils to be seriously involved in the any plan preparation by the County Council.
- iv) There needs to be resources made available to enable delivery.

The secretary is to inform the Welsh Government of the comments regarding the consultation.

### **d)Local Government Financial Commission for Wales**

Cllr Woolly informed the meeting of the above.

The meeting **AGREED** that there is a need for priorities to be set and duties understood before taking forward any financial basis. This includes sorting out powers and duties.

## **10. Any other business**

### **10.1 Speakers for January 2016 meeting**

The meeting considered if they wished to have a speaker at the January meeting and if so who that should be:

The meeting **AGREED** not to have any speakers for the January meeting.

There was a vote with 19 to 4 in favour of the above.

## **10.2 Ombudsman Consultation**

The meeting considered the Ombudsman consultation and the following was noted:

- a) The new guidelines affect Town and Community Council which run services.
- b) The new guidelines allow the ombudsman to investigate any matter without a complaint being received.

## **10.3 Karen Davies**

The meeting was updated on the progress of Karen Davies and it was confirmed that she was improving and feeling a lot better.

The meeting **AGREED** to send a card wishing her well.

## **10.4 General Practice Doctors**

The meeting was informed of the situation with regards to retiring GP's. This is likely to cause some issues in a few years' time. The level is approx. 25% of GP's will be retiring affecting possibly 21,000 population.

The meeting **AGREED** that the Secretary is to write to Welsh Government seeking some assurance that the matter will be addressed.

## **11. Dates for meetings 2015-2016**

To note the following meeting dates for the ensuing year:

### **Quarterly Meetings**

22nd January 2016

Llandudno

22nd April 2016

Welshpool

15th July 2016 (annual meeting) – Connah's Quay.

10.30am start in all cases.

### **Executive Meetings**

11th December 2015

11th March 2016

10th June 2016

10.30am start in all cases. Meetings held at Rhyl Town Council Offices.

REPORT FOR THE MINISTERS OFFICE FOR PUBLIC SERVICES  
WELSH GOVERNMENT



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23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The North and Mid Wales Association of Local Councils has been in existence for over 40 years and represents Local Councils in Mid and North Wales. A map showing the area and membership is set out at appendix A.
- 1.2 This document sets out an outline of the concerns and points for discussion with regard to future service delivery by Town and Community Councils.
- 1.3 The Association wishes to aid the process whereby a compromise can be reached so that services can be protected and the way forward for Town and Community Councils identified.
- 1.4 To date there are many very lengthy and complicated documents produced on the subject. However, to date the Local Councils are still awaiting what is to happen in the future when the subject has been discussed over a several years already.
- 1.5 The Association Members are trying to ascertain what the future is going to bring so that the planning process can be put in place to make such transmissions easier and to aid the taking over of public services with some certainty as to the future.





## **2. Aim and objective of this document**

- 2.1. The aim of this document is to set the scene, set out some of the concerns of Town and Community Councils and to seek a way forward through discussion with the Office of the Minister for Public Services.
- 2.2 The concerns over ‘how things are going’ with regard to the future of Local Councils and the ‘delivery of essential services to our communities’ are very real and significant.



### **3. Setting the scene**

#### **3.1 The background that Town and Community Councils recognise is set out here:**

Budget cuts by the principle authorities are extensive.

The services being removed or reduced are being offered to Town and Community Councils often with no funding, with little or inaccurate information and with limited time to respond.

There is a different approach by each principle authority with some being 'ruthless' and others being 'co-operative' with regard to Town and Community Councils.

The ability of even the larger Town and Community Councils on their own to deliver services is very difficult.

The clustering of Town and Community Councils to deliver services at this time is patchy at best and often just not happening.

The current programme for enlarging, combining or clustering of Town and Community Councils mean that before the Town and Community Councils are enlarged, combined or clustered taking on service delivery is more difficult and the fear is that services maybe lost (due to this) and that they are unlikely to return in the future.



#### **4. Concerns of the Association Members**

4.1 The main concerns of the Association Members are:

- i) The speed at which such cutbacks by some County Councils are taking place.
- ii) The ability of Town and Community Councils to run the services needed is not here in many cases.
- iii) The ability of the existing Town and Community Clerks (in most cases) is not at a level where such services can be delivered.
- iv) The asset transfers to Town and Community Councils are not always being completed on a fair and equal basis. They should be transferred at no cost to the Community – as public funds have already paid for them.
- v) The need is recognised for the Town and Community Council review to be brought forward as a matter of urgency.

4.2 There are cases where Local Councils have taken on services and made it work, however in these cases many Clerks are competent or professional and often from management in private industry.

4.3 There are some cases which can be used to form a basis of a fair and equitable way forward.



## 5. Discussion points

### 5.1 The Association would like to discuss the following:

- a) The realistic timetable for the implementation of the proposed new County Councils as set out at appendix B.
- b) The timetable for Town and Community Council Reform including the relationship with the timetable for principle authority reform.
- c) The need for a common approach to asset transfer arrangements across Wales with regard to Local Town and Community Councils.
- d) The need for a common approach to Service Transfer arrangements across Wales with strong leadership from the Welsh Government.
- e) The ability of Town and Community Councils to deliver services taking into account the following:
  - i) Town and Community Clerks.
  - ii) Funding.
  - iii) Ability to manage such services.
  - iv) Lack of information.
  - v) Public involvement.
- f) The duties that any new or existing Town and Community Councils may have to take on board.

## A Map of area of the Association Members



### Members include:

Abergele, Argoed, Baguillt, Bangor, Conwy, Bay of Colwyn, Connah's Quay, Caerwys, Caia Park Wrexham, Buckley, Denbigh, Flint, Hawarden, Llandudno, Llanfair Caereinion, Llandrino, Llanasa, Llanfairfechan, Llandysillio, Llangollen, Menial Bridge, Penmaenmawr, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan, Rhyl, Ruthin, St Asaph's, Shotton, Towyn and Kinmel Bay and Welshpool.

## B Map of new principle authorities proposed

