



## **MINUTES**

of the quarterly meeting of the **Association** held on  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022 at 10.30am**  
held by Zoom

### **Record of attendance:**

#### **Present were:**

Cllr Peter Morton Chair	City of St Asaph Council
Cllr Alyn Ashworth Vice Chair	Denbigh Town Council
Veronica Crosby	MP Anglesey
Bethan Davies	PA to MP Anglesey
Cllr Myfanwy Baines	
Cllr Glenys Baker	Bay of Colwyn Town Council
Cllr Brian Bertola	Llandudno Town Council
Cllr Karen Davies	Holywell Town Council
Cllr Michael Davies	Menai Bridge Town Council
Cllr Peter Davies	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Lynette Edwards	Caersys Community Council
Cllr Eric Faulkner	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Gill Faulkner	Connah's Quay Town Council
Steve Goodrum	Connah's Quay Town Council
Cllr Shirley Jones-Roberts	Abergele Town Council
Cllr Stuart License	Flint Town Council
Cllr Bernise McLoughlin	Towyn and Kinmell Bay Town Council
Cllr Brian Roberts	Abergele Town Council
Cllr Helen Roberts	Conwy Town Council
Cllr Arnold Woodley	Buckley Town Council
Cllr Peter York	Holywell Town Council
Robert Robinson Secretary	Llanfair Caereinion Town Council

#### **Apologies were received from:**

Cllr Joan Butterfield President	Rhyl Town Council
Jill Ellison	City of St Asaph Council

### **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

### **2. Minutes of the last Full Association Meeting**

The meeting considered and approved the minutes of the last full Association meeting held in October 2021.



### 3. Holyhead free port

The meeting welcomed Virginia Crosby MP for Anglesey regarding Holyhead being designated a Free Port.

A presentation was given on the benefits of a Free Port and the current situation.

- i) Free Ports give tax incentives (duties and business rates relief).
- ii) Free Ports make transactions simpler & simplified customs.
- iii) Free Ports are worldwide.
- iv) The nearest Free Port to the North Wales coast is Liverpool.
- v) 2019 manifesto records 10 extra Ports to be added. At least one in Wales.
- vi) Michael Gove is in charge of Free Ports at Westminster and the First Minister in the Welsh Government.
- vii) Investment and business will widely benefit from Holyhead being a Free Port.
- viii) Young people will be better supported with more job opportunities keeping them in their home area.

The map below shows the other Ports in Wales that may be seeking Free Port Status.





It was agreed that the Secretary should take the following actions:

- i) Write to Michael Gove supporting the Holyhead Free Port Status.
- ii) Write to Mark Drayford supporting the Holyhead Free Port Status.
- iii) Issue a press released to the North Wales newspapers and media informing of the Associations support for a Free Port.

#### **4. Actions from and since last meeting**

To meeting noted the actions taken since the last full Association meeting:

#### **5. Financial Report**

The meeting received a financial report. The bank account current balance is £6,111.74p.

#### **6. To receive a report on Homeless in North and Mid Wales**

The meeting received an update on the above. Since the Covid pandemic it now transpires that there are 12,500 homes.

#### **7. North Wales Coast Transport**

To consider matters relating to transport in Wales as follows:

- a) A report about the Rail Services North Coast from the Committee.
- b) Cllr Peter York updated the meeting regarding a letter from Welsh Government regarding electric cars (raised by Holywell Town Council).

#### **8. Consultations**

The meeting noted the consultations completed since the last meeting which were:

- a) Homeless Consultation,
- b) The IRPW Consultation.
- c) Planning changes (permitted development and the use class order with regard to second homes)

#### **9. Independent Review Panel for Wales**

The secretary reported that the £150 allowance will not be taxed as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 (confirmed by the HRMC).

The Town Clerk is to take up the issue of Councillors being on the payroll for payments.



## **10. Council Tax**

The meeting was updated on the Welsh Government review of Council Tax due to take place during the current Sinned term.

The meeting considered the attached paper. Various views were given and it was agreed that members would consult with their councils and that this item would then be discussed at the April meeting.

See appendix A.

## **11. Climate change and a Policy for the Association.**

The meeting considered whether the Association should have a Climate Change Policy. After a short discussion the proposed Climate Change Plan was adopted as set out at appendix B to these minutes.

## **12. VAT**

The secretary passed information onto members who might not be registered for VAT (under the Local Council scheme) with regards to years where a reclaim of VAT is in excess of £7,500. Any Council under this scheme can average the VAT over 7 years (5 past, current and estimated next year). If the average is below £7,500pa the VAT can be reclaimed in the normal way.

## **13. Future meetings**

The members were keen to meet in person as soon as possible.

To this end (all being well) the April quarterly meeting will be held in person at the Bod Ewr Hotel just off the A55 expressway.

## **14. Date for next meeting**

The meeting noted the dates for future meeting.

### **Quarterly Meetings**

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022 Annual Meeting

### **Executive Meetings**

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022

All meetings start at 10.30am.

**15. Actions to be taken forward**

The following actions are to be taken forward:

No	Action	By
1	Minutes to be published on the website	Secretary
2	Letter to be sent to M Gove on Holyhead Free Port	Secretary
3	Letter to Mark Drayford on Holyhead Free Port	Secretary
4	Issue press release on support for Holyhead Free Port	Secretary
5	Post Climate Change policy on website	Secretary
6	Put Council Tax on next Agenda	Secretary
7	Book Bod Erw Hotel for April meeting	Secretary
8	Take up issue of Councillors being on payroll for payments.	Secretary



# **COUNCIL TAX**

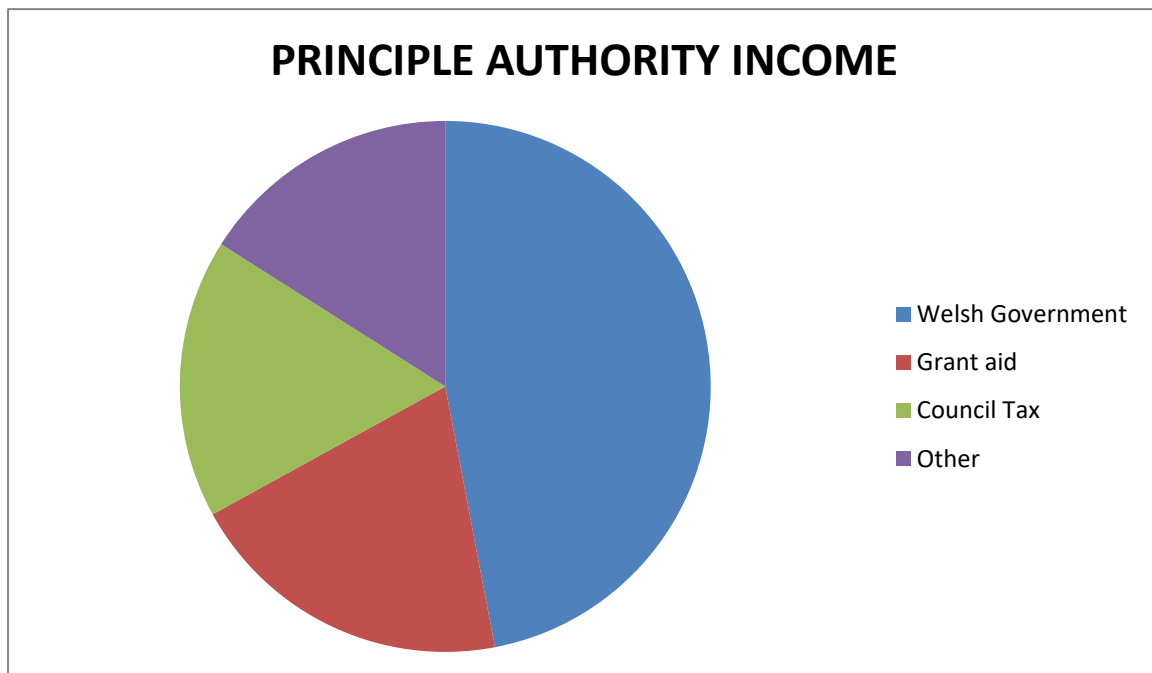
## **1. Introduction**

There has been a number of calls for Government to find a more fair and equitable method of funding local services through Council Tax. This paper gives some ideas as to what the Association might wish to consider.

A government think tank recently posted ‘Is there an alternative? There has to be. As courts continue to be brought to a standstill by council tax debt cases and bailiffs make more visits to desperate families, Westminster needs to wrestle with the issue as some governments before have tried to do, to find a way of updating council tax for the post-property boom age, and make the wealthy pay their fair share compared to those on low incomes.’

## **2. What does the Council Tax pay for**

The Council Tax collected is retained by the principle authority to pay for local services. The proportion of Council Tax to the total income of a principle authority is shown in the chart below:





The Welsh Government allocation includes business rates.

The above is that published in Denbighshire but all Principle Councils are similar.

### **3. The issues**

The main issues include:

- i) With more people being employed on the minimum or living wage the proportion of take home pay spent on Council Tax is disproportionate.
- ii) It is one of the very few taxes which are not progressive and based upon ability to pay.
- iii) It is a property tax in the way it is assessed.

### **4. History**

There has for decades been a form of 'rates or tax' on residential occupation.

The schemes which have been in place (or nearly put in place) in recent times are:

- i) Rates: An amount paid in the pound against a rateable value. The rateable value was based upon the rentability of the property.
- ii) Community Charge: An amount paid by each person over the age of 18. (i.e. if there is one person in a home they pay one share, if there are five people in one home they pay five shares)
- iii) Council Tax: A charge based upon property sale values within set bands.

### **5. The alternatives**

Possible alternatives to the current Council Tax taking into account 'ability to pay' could be:

- i) **Council tax with revised bandings**  
Create more upper tax bands lowering the amount paid by those in smaller and less valuable properties. However this does not address the 'ability to pay' aspect but will go a long way towards it.
- ii) **Local Income Tax**  
To apply a local income tax. This is complicated, difficult to administer and very difficult to collect.



**iii) Rates**

To return to the 'old rates system' whereby a property has a rateable value (based upon rentability of the property) against which a rate in the pound would be applied. More complicated than Council Tax but easier to administer than local income tax.

**iv) Community Charge**

To make an annual charge based upon the number of persons per household over voting age. This charge to be reduced for those in full time education and for senior citizens.

**6. What can we do**

The Association could, if it so wished, campaign to see a change in the Council Tax System as agreed with the Membership at a full quarterly meeting from a recommendation by the Executive. The Executive supports (iv).

**R A Robinson**  
**January 2022**





**APPENDIX B**

**The Town Council Climate Change Action Plan**

<b>LIST OF POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES</b>
<b>Drive less</b> - Walk, bike, car-pool or take mass transit more often. You'll save one pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive! Use vehicles less.
<b>Executive Meetings</b> – Host Executive Meetings by Zoom to reduce travel.
<b>Recycle more</b> - Reduce paper copies to only those needed to function.
<b>Avoid products with a lot of packaging</b> – when purchasing goods for the Association to consider who is used to reduce packaging.
<b>Plant a tree</b> - Plant a tree in the area of the Chairs Council each year.
<b>Turn off electronic devices</b> – All Association equipment to be turned off at the end of each day.
<b>Efficient equipment</b> - When equipment is renewed to replace with energy efficient products.
<b>Renewable Energy</b> - Support renewable energy schemes where they are environmentally friendly.
<b>Publicity</b> - Make the public aware of the Association’s actions and consider how to promote the global warming issues.
<b>Monitoring</b> - Ensure monitoring of the policy so that progress is made.