



MINUTES

of a meeting of the Executive of the Association
held on Friday 18th March 2022 at 10.30am
by Zoom

Present were

Cllr Peter Morton (Chair), Cllr Alyn Ashworth (Vice Chair), Cllr Brian Bertola, Cllr Lynet Edwards, Cllr Bernise McLoughlin and Cllr Brian Roberts.

In attendance: Robert Robinson Secretary

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Joan Butterfield.

1. Welcome by the Chair

The meeting received a welcome from the Chair of the Association.

2. Minutes of the last Executive Meeting

The meeting considered and approved the minutes of the last Executive meeting held in December 2021.

3. Actions taken from the last meeting

The meeting noted the actions taken following the last meeting as set out below:

| No | Item | Status |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Minutes to be prepared and circulated | Completed |
| 2 | Minutes to be published on web site | Completed |
| 3 | Quarterly agenda to be published and circulated | Completed |
| 4 | Revised Council Tax Paper to be added to agenda for next quarterly meeting | Councils all asked for Council Tax responses |
| 5 | Membership fees from Councils who have not renewed to be sent out after the Christmas break | Completed |

4. Financial and governance

The meeting noted the bank balances as £6,090.74p.

The Secretary reminded the meeting that at the Annual Meeting in July elections will also include the President as it follows a normal council election.

5. Agenda for the April quarterly meeting

The meeting considered the agenda for the next quarterly meeting to be held on 22nd April 2022. There is no speaker planned for this meeting as attendance will possibly be lower than normal due to the election period.



See appendix A for agreed agenda for the quarterly meeting.

6. Transport

Various points were discussed regarding transport in North Wales (these will be referred to the North Wales Transport Committee) including:

- i) The excellent bus services operated by various contractors including Arriva.
- ii) The poor Holyhead services with many trains delayed or cancelled.
- iii) Holyhead Port – letter from Minister was thought to say very little and needs to be followed up.
- iv) Rumours that Towyn and Kinmell Bay station maybe re-opening. The Secretary is to check this item.
- v) Discuss options for possible opening of the Rhyl to Llangollen line.

7. North Wales Hospital Provision

The view was expressed that the Cottage Hospitals work well in North Wales. It appears that the Alexandra Hospital which was supposed to have works completed by now has not started. The secretary is to find out the current position.

8. Date of next meeting

To note the date of the next meeting being Friday 17th June 2022 at 10.30am.

9. Actions to be taken forward

To take forward from the meeting the following actions:

| No | Action |
|----|--|
| 1 | Circulate Minutes of the meeting |
| 2 | Publish the agenda for the April Quarterly Meeting |
| 3 | Follow up the Towyn & Kinmell Bay station rumour |
| 4 | Ascertain the status of the Alexandra Hospital works |
| 5 | Send out reminder about discussion on Council Tax |



AGENDA

for the quarterly meeting of the **Association** to be held on
Friday 22nd April 2022 at 10.30am
to be held at Boderw, St Asaphs
 (see enclosed map for details of how to get there)

1. Welcome

To receive a welcome from the Chair to the meeting.

2. Record of attendance

To record a record of attendance and to receive any apologies for absence.

3. Minutes of the last Full Association Meeting

To approve the minutes of the last full Association meeting held in January 2022.

4. Actions from and since last meeting

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

| No | Item | Status |
|----|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | Prepare minutes and post on website | Completed |
| 2 | Accounts for 2020-2021 audit | Under way |
| 3 | Holywell transport issues to be raised at the transport liaison meeting | On agenda for this meeting |
| 4 | Meeting with Welsh Government over a minister for North Wales to be progressed. | On-going |
| 5 | Invite Betsi Cadwallader Health Board to the January meeting. | Not attending. |
| 6 | Respond to the Homeless Consultation | Completed |
| 7 | Raise the subject of electric cars with the Executive at its next meeting (Holywell request) | On agenda for this meeting |

5. Financial Report

To receive a financial report from the Secretary.

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

To consider an update on the above.

7. North Wales Coast Transport

To consider:

- i) A report from the Committee (meeting on 8th April 2022).



- ii) To consider the announcement that the A55 improvements are not going forward.

8. Holyhead Port

To receive an update on communications with Westminster and Cardiff.

9. Council Tax

To consider progress with the Welsh Government review of Council Tax.
See appendix A (paper issued at the last meeting).

Following the last meeting Member Councils were asked to consider their stance on Council Tax.

10. Consultations

To consider the following consultation – short presentation at the meeting - Taxation and restrictions on second homes.

11. Elections

To consider any matters regarding the forthcoming elections.

12. Insurances

To consider a short report on Insurance advice and rising building costs.

13. Any other matters of business

To consider any other items of business raised by Members.

14. Date for next meeting

To note the dates for future meeting.

Quarterly Meetings

Friday 22nd July 2022 – Annual Meeting
Meeting at Connah's Quay Civic Halls

Executive Meetings

Friday 10th June 2022

All meetings start at 10.30am and will be by Zoom until restrictions allow.



APPENDIX A

COUNCIL TAX

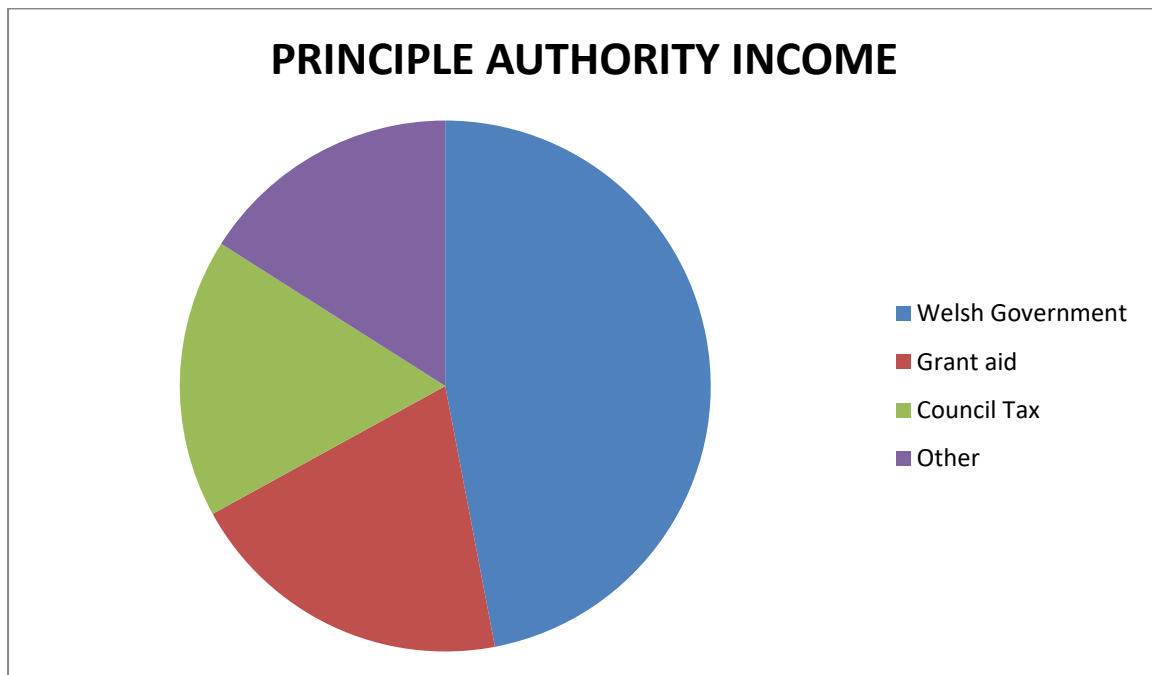
1. Introduction

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 MBE FRICS FSLCC

March 2022