



Minutes of the Meeting of the **Consultative Committee** of Chepstow Town Council
held via Zoom on Thursday, 9th March 2022 at 7.00pm

Present:

Chair: Cllr D Rooke

Councillors: Y Havard, T Kirton

Apologies:

In Attendance: Mrs L Allen (Town Clerk)

1. Election of Chair

Nominations for Chair were sought.

RESOLVED:

To elect Cllr D Rooke as Chair.

2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

None.

3. Consultation

Members considered the Welsh Government Consultation on [The Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021: Draft Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021: Community and Town Councils statutory guidance | GOV.WALES](#)

RESOLVED:

To submit the response, appended to the minutes, to the Welsh Government Consultation on The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Draft Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Community and Town Councils statutory guidance | GOV.WALES

4. Date of Next Meeting

To be called as necessary.

CLOSE: This completed the business of the meeting at 6.50pm.

SIGNED CHAIR PERSON: _____

DATE: _____

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Draft Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

Your name: **Lucy Allen**

Organisation (if applicable): **Chepstow Town Council**

email / telephone number: admin@chepstow.co.uk / 01291 626370

Your address **The Gatehouse, High Street, Chepstow, NP16 5LH**

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here:

This consultation is seeking views on draft statutory guidance for community and town councils.

Questions

1. Generally, is the structure and coverage of the guidance presented clearly and in a way which is practical for community and town councils?

The Town Council agree, in part, that the structure and coverage of the guidance is presented clearly and is a practical tool for community and town councils.

Chapter 1

2. Does Chapter 1 provide sufficient and appropriate guidance on the eligibility conditions for exercising the general power of competence? Is it clear how the general power of competence should be applied? What additional information would be helpful?

The Town Council have concerns that the information does not go far enough. In particular, how are the projects to be maintained when Councillors change term every five years? Councillors are representatives and therefore any projects will fall to employed staff to take on which is likely to increase employment costs. Finally, it's possible that a new Council could be making a decision on an important piece of legislation of which they may not fully understand the implications.

3. What additional information would be helpful to illustrate or clarify how the general power of competence could be applied to community councils? Do you have any case studies which could support this?

A sample of case studies would be very helpful in this area.

Chapter 2 and 3

4. Do Chapters 2 and 3 provide sufficient and appropriate guidance on the requirements relating to multi-location meetings and on how the public may participate in council meetings?

In regards Multi-location meetings, the Town Council has concerns that the level of debate and emotion can be lost and that meetings take longer.

Participation at meetings - whilst the guidance is appropriate for smaller community councils it will be more difficult in larger Town Councils. The guidance contradicts standing orders and allowing MOP to participate during the meeting may be difficult to control. There is a code of conduct for Councillors but not for MOP and there is concern as to how this can be managed in multi-location meetings.

Chapter 4

5. Does Chapter 4 provide sufficient and appropriate guidance on meeting the duty to prepare and publish annual reports? What additional specific information would be helpful?

The Town Council feel that the guidance provided is sufficient however have concerns for the smaller community councils. The Council suggested that there be a threshold to prepare and publish. Smaller community councils often have very part time clerks and any work which the Council undertaker will all be captured in their minutes.

Chapter 5

6. Does Chapter 5 provide sufficient and appropriate guidance on meeting the duty to prepare and publish training plans? What additional information would be helpful?

On the whole the Town Council agree with the guidance however note that training is not mandatory for Councillors and that they are unpaid elected members. The Council suggest that consideration be given that only those Councils who exercise the General Power of Competence be required to prepare and publish training plans.

7. We would like to know your views on the effects that this guidance would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

The Town Council welcome and hope that there will be equal opportunities for the Welsh Language to be used however are concerned that there will be cost implications for many community and town councils

8. Please also explain how you believe the proposed guidance could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

No response.

9. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

No response.