

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Facilities Management Committee meeting
Thursday 4th January 2017

Present: - Chair Cllr Michael Theodoulou, Cllrs Ken Edwards, John Hedley Jones, Robert John, Mrs Shirley Matthews and Mrs Moira Thomas.

In attendance: Melanie Carroll-Cliffe (Town Clerk), Lee Fox (TSO), Alan Howells (RFO)

(Meeting Room, Memorial Hall, Burry Port 9.00am – 11.35am)

1. Personal Matters

Apologies were received from Cllr Geraint Davies.

2. To receive Members' declarations of interest in respect of the business to be transacted

Members confirmed their usual declarations of interest. No new declarations were made in relation to the business to be transacted.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2016 were approved as a true record.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

P1 (4) Matters arising

Cllr Michael Theodoulou advised that he had been unable to speak with Lee Waters AM since the last meeting. However, members were aware that prior to Christmas, the Clerk had confirmed a meeting date with Nia Griffith MP and Lee Waters AM for 13th January 2017.

P5 (13) Referred matters

It was confirmed that following the last committee meeting, the Finance Committee had approved the expenditure to enable the first phase work of the bar facility to be carried out. This work will therefore commence shortly.

5. Consideration of the Committee's Budget Monitoring report

As the RFO was in attendance, he outlined details of the Committee's budget monitoring report. This was up to 31st December 2016 and the RFO indicated that it had not yet been considered by the Finance Committee, which would be meeting the following week.

In relation to income, the RFO confirmed that the balance received from Burry Port Parks Committee had now been transferred to the Facilities Management Committee. In relation to

the footpath grant and the SLAs, the RFO has spoken to the relevant County Council Officers and agreed the amounts. He has also spoken with Mr Matt Morden and agreed payment of the final subsidy instalment on Pembrey Memorial Hall.

With regard to expenditure, the RFO highlighted areas where this exceeded budget and where virements had either been actioned or were needed.

Cllr John Hedley Jones referred to the payment which would be made later in the financial year for footway lighting. He reminded members of previous discussions and that there were some areas which the Town Council should not be responsible for the payment of. The TSO advised that he was due to have a meeting with a County Council Officer in relation to this issue on Monday 9th January.

Also, in relation to expenditure, the TSO highlighted that there would be further costs payable on the Copperworks site for the water reconnection.

6. To further consider the Committee's budget requirements for the 2017/18 financial year

The RFO circulated working papers to members in relation to the proposed budget for 2017/18.

Members considered the projected income for the Committee for the new financial year, which they approved.

In relation to expenditure, the TSO had prepared a report on work which was required to the Council's various buildings, together with timescales setting out when the work was required.

There was a discussion in relation to the funding of necessary work. As the current reserves are within normal range, this excludes the possibility of these funds being used for required maintenance work. Accordingly, the two viable options are either to set up a reserve fund and to address the work over the next few years, or alternatively, the Council could obtain a loan. The RFO was requested to find out details of the cost of the Town Council borrowing funds and he therefore briefly left the meeting to source this information.

The RFO subsequently advised that the precise rate of the borrowing would depend on how much the Council borrowed and over what period of time. In light of information provided, members agreed that a recommendation should be made to the Finance Committee that a loan of £100,000 be obtained over a 15 year period. This would mean repayments of £8,000 per annum. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for there to be a delegation from the Committee in attendance at the Finance Committee meeting, to enable any queries to be addressed.

7. Update on issues relating to the Copperworks site

As had been indicated earlier, a meeting had now been arranged with Nia Griffith MP and Lee Waters AM for Friday 13th January 2017 at 11.30am. Cllr Ken Edwards referred to the previous public meeting which had taken place, where he had been requested by Nia Griffith MP to speak and he had tried to be impartial in setting out the position. Cllr Ken Edwards

expressed disappointment in the actions of Lee Waters AM and in particular, that he had not checked facts with him or the Clerk prior to submitting his letter to the Planning Department.

There was discussion regarding the Planning Officer urging progress, particularly in relation to the Town Council lodging a statement, setting out its position. Cllr Michael Theodoulou requested the TSO to obtain clarity on the status of the planning application, as if it has not been formally lodged, the County Council could not pressurise the Town Council in this regard. Also, he requested the TSO to establish for what period the existing bat survey would remain current for.

Following the discussions, it was agreed that committee members meet with Nia Griffith MP and Lee Waters AM on 13th January to provide them with clarity on the Council's position. It was further agreed that members meet at the earlier time of 11am to enable a brief discussion beforehand.

8. Update on potential asset transfers in relation to parks/open spaces

The Clerk reminded members of discussions which had taken place at the previous meeting, when it was agreed that at the next Town Council meeting, consideration needed to be given to three issues, namely its position relating to the Bowls Club, its position regarding the smaller parks and lastly, what should be done in relation to the Memorial Park pending satisfaction on the drainage problems. Also, as there was no Town Council meeting in December, these issues would need to be considered at the January meeting.

Members therefore discussed these various issues, to enable recommendations to be made to Town Council, as follows:

Burry Port Memorial Park

Members were informed that notification had now been received via an email to the Technical Services Officer that the County Council would not be carrying out any drainage works to the Memorial Park prior to its transfer. The TSO also informed members that he was aware of a particular current problem with drainage in the Memorial Park. This is a very recent issue, with water entering the gardens of adjacent properties.

Understandably, members were concerned that the Town Council is not in a position to afford the cost of the drainage rectification. Accordingly, it was **APPROVED** that the recommendation of the committee is that in light of the information received from the County Council regarding the drainage issues, the Town Council should withdraw its expression of interest to take over the entirety of the Memorial Park. The committee also agreed to recommend that the Mayor, together with the Chairpersons of the Facilities Management Committee, the Finance Committee and the Regeneration and Community Services Committee should collectively prepare and distribute a statement setting out the Council's reasons.

Individual parts of the Memorial Park

Members discussed that there was still a possibility of the Town Council considering taking on parts of the Memorial Park in order to safeguard the sports clubs who use the facilities.

However, there was a general view that there would need to be benefit to the community in the Town Council effectively acting as a “middle man”, as otherwise the clubs could directly take on a lease from the County Council. As members could not specifically identify the benefit to the community, they were of the view that all of the clubs should be treated in the same manner. It was discussed that even without taking on a lease from the County Council, the Town Council could still assist the sports clubs and they should be made aware of this. For example, there is the grant scheme run by the Town Council. Also, there was the possibility that the Town Council could possibly undertake some work for the sports clubs at cheaper cost than the County Council.

Accordingly, it was **APPROVED** that the recommendation of the Facilities Management Committee is that the Town Council should not take on a lease in relation to individual parts of the Memorial Park. Also, a statement should be provided to all of the clubs, referring to the fact that the Town Council is aware of the challenges which the clubs will face but advising of alternative support which can be provided by the Council, including its grant scheme.

Other smaller parks/play areas

Members were informed that the County Council had still failed to provide copies of the annual inspection reports for each of these parks, despite having been promised these at the meeting held with County Council officers on 4th October 2016 and further assurances received since this time.

Members were of the view that potentially, the Town Council could still consider the transfer of these parks, but this is subject to the annual inspection reports being satisfactory, when they are obtained.

9. To consider a request from Burry Port Lionhearts Boxing Club for a review of their terms of occupation

The Clerk informed members that following the meeting which had taken place with representatives from Lionhearts Boxing Club on 16th November 2016, she had been communicating with them regarding their request to amend their terms of occupation as set out in their Licence to Occupy. The Clerk confirmed that specific requests had now been made in an email, which she outlined to members. These were as follows:

- A reduction of the rent (but based upon the same available hours of usage).
- The ability to vacate the premises at any time, with one month’s notice.
- Rent to be paid on a monthly basis, rather than quarterly.

Members discussed that the Boxing Club is trying to compare its rental charges to other organisations but that this is not a realistic comparison, as the rooms/usage are completely different. It was therefore felt that if a commercial view was taken, then a reduction in the rent should not be considered. However, as the Boxing Club is newly established, members felt that some short term assistance may be appropriate through a small reduction in the rental charges. It was therefore **APPROVED** that the requests from the Boxing Club should be referred to the Fees and Charges Sub Committee, for full consideration.

Members further discussed other information which had been sent in the email to the Clerk in response to queries raised. In particular, the email had indicated that there was no imminent intention to seek affiliation with the Welsh Amateur Boxing Association (WABA) nor was any indication given as to whether this is likely to happen in future. Members were of the view that the Boxing Club should be allowed a further year to affiliate with WABA, failing which they could not be considered to be a Boxing Club and may not be able to continue in occupation. Members also discussed the intentions of the Boxing Club to work with autistic children and they were concerned that assurance was needed that there was the right level of expertise. Accordingly, it was further agreed that the Clerk notify the Boxing Club that evidence of the experts who would be involved would need to be provided and approved prior to a programme of work with autistic children commencing.

10. To appoint representatives to attend a meeting of Burry Port Memorial Park Bowls Club on Thursday 12th January 2017 at 10am

It was agreed that this meeting be attended by Cllrs Michael Theodoulou, Robert John and John Hedley Jones.

11. Any other competent business

The Clerk informed members that a request had been received in relation to a potential new project. The Clerk outlined details of this request which were set out in an email recently received. This related to the setting up of a community hub in Burry Port. The email set out details of what activities were intended.

Following brief discussion, members **APPROVED** that the Clerk revert to the person concerned, suggesting that he views the Council's facilities to assess if any of these are suitable for his requirements. It was further agreed that if a booking was made, this would be charged at Strand A.