

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Facilities Management Committee Special meeting

Monday 30th January 2017

Present: Chair Cllr Michael Theodoulou, Cllrs Geraint Davies, John Hedley Jones, Robert John, Mrs Shirley Matthews and Mrs Moira Thomas.

Non Committee members: Cllrs Mrs Lisa Mitchell and David Owens

**In attendance: Melanie Carroll-Cliffe (Town Clerk), Lee Fox (TSO)
(OAP Hall, Burry Port 9.30am – 11.05am)**

1. Personal Matters

Apologies were received from the Mayor, Cllr John James.

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 further consider the potential transfer of the smaller parks with Pembrey and Burry Port

The TSO advised that annual inspections had been carried out on behalf of Carmarthenshire County Council upon all of the smaller parks within the Pembrey and Burry Port area, in relation to which transfers are being considered. He reported that out of the 7 parks, 2 of them were rated as moderate risk, whilst the others were classed low risk in the annual inspections. Since receipt of the copy annual inspections, the TSO has requested Mr Paul Murray of Carmarthenshire County Council to provide a full breakdown of the components. This will provide important information and for example, will enable assessment of the cost of manufacturing one off components.

The TSO outlined information on individual parks, as follows:

Tan y Bryn Park

This was one of the parks rated as moderate risk. The TSO advised that he thought that there was a minimum of £1,000 worth of work to be carried out there.

Pen y Bryn Park

Again, this was assessed as moderate risk. Members discussed that this park is not well used.

The remainder of the parks, which were assessed as low risk, were discussed as follows:

Cwm Eglwys Park

It was discussed that there are flooding issues with this park.

Waun Sidan Park

Members were informed that although this is quite a new park, it is deteriorating quite quickly. It was suggested that potentially, the warranty could be considered. It was highlighted that this site was identified as a possible “super park” in Pembrey.

Tyle Teg

This is in an extremely poor, scruffy condition and it was felt surprising that it was classed as low risk. It was discussed that there are a number of corrosion issues. Also, there are uneven surfaces and problems with algae and moss growing.

Burrows Park

No significant problems were identified in relation to this park and it was discussed that the transfer of this is integral to the proposed disposal of the annexe building on the Copperworks site.

Trem y Mynydd Park

It was discussed that although there is a problem with open spaces around this area, the park itself is in good condition.

Although detailed information is not yet available in relation to these parks, it was suggested that if the smaller parks were looked at on a purely business basis, the potential transfer of them would not be considered. However, this is not the sole consideration for the Town Council, as it has to consider the provision of facilities for the community. It was recalled that at a public meeting, there was willingness for the precept to be increased in order to secure the future of community facilities. Nevertheless, the Town Council could not be irresponsible in its actions.

The Clerk highlighted that the Council also needed to consider the hidden costs of the transfers, particularly the manpower hours for the ongoing maintenance. The TSO added that he believed it would require two men to maintain all of the parks, especially over the spring and summer periods. It was suggested that possibly, the maintenance of the parks could be outsourced. Members were also reminded that there would obviously be additional insurance costs for the Council, as all of the parks would need to be insured.

Following the discussions, members agreed that in principle, it should be recommended that the transfer of the smaller parks be proceeded with but this is subject to the detailed information on costs being available for consideration at the next Town Council meeting.

4. To further consider the potential transfer of Burry Port Memorial Park from Carmarthenshire County Council

Members were reminded of the difficulties surrounding the proposed transfer of Burry Port Memorial Park. In particular, Carmarthenshire County Council has stated in writing that it will not undertake remedial work in relation to the drainage problems. The only report which has been provided is extremely out of date, dating back to 2004. The County Council has been requested to grant an extension of the deadline of 31st March 2017 for completion of asset transfers in order to secure maximum funding but this has been refused.

The communications between the Clerk and Mr Jonathan Fearn of Carmarthenshire County Council in relation to the drainage issues had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. It was discussed that the County Council is trying to force the Town Council to use Section 106 money to rectify the long standing drainage issues, although this is funding which should be used to improve the local community. It was also commented that other Section 106 money had been re-directed from Burry Port to Bynea.

As the County Council had failed to agree to fund the cost of the new drainage survey and report upon the Memorial Park, the Clerk had authorised the instruction of a specialist company, in accordance with the decision made at the Town Council meeting held on 18th January 2017. The purpose of the report is to provide information on the nature and extent of the drainage problems, what needs to be done to rectify the issues and how much it will cost. However, members were informed that it is unlikely that the results of the survey will be available prior to the February Town Council meeting.

Members agreed that the Town Council could not make a decision on the proposed transfer of the Memorial Park until it knows the cost of rectifying the drainage issues. Having regard to timescales, it was therefore **APPROVED** that the Clerk revert to Carmarthenshire County Council regarding an extension but this time directing the correspondence to Cllr Meryl Gravell and the Chief Executive. It was agreed that full background information should be set out in such a letter, including the fact that the Town Council is paying for an up to date survey. Also, the County Council should be urged to agree an extension of the deadline of 31st March for three months, both for the Town Council and the sporting organisations. This would enable the Town Council to complete its enquiries and make an informed decision.

5. Consideration of individual clubs and organisations

It was discussed that there are advantages and disadvantages of the Town Council taking on the head lease of Burry Port Memorial Park and sub-letting to the various clubs. From the perspective of the clubs, the Town Council is easier to deal with than the County Council. However, the Town Council does not need to have a lease in order to assist the clubs and can still continue to support them in other ways. Also, it was acknowledged that there would undoubtedly be boundary issues between the clubs, as well as between the Town Council and the County Council.

Cllr Geraint Davies indicated that he thought that Burry Port Rugby Club may proceed in taking a lease relating to the pitches.

It was discussed that the sporting organisations appear to be understanding of the Town Council's dilemma in presently being unable to make a decision regarding a lease on the Memorial Park. Members were mindful of the fact that the individual clubs could be financially prejudiced if they awaited a decision being made by the Town Council. Following discussion, it was therefore **APPROVED** that the sporting organisations be notified that due to the present uncertainty, serious consideration should be given to them taking on an individual lease directly from the County Council, although also advising that an overriding lease could still be taken on by the Town Council at a later date.

6. Any other competent business

- **Lionhearts Boxing Club**

The Clerk informed members that the Lionhearts Boxing Club was awaiting a decision in relation to its request to amend its terms of occupation. The request had been considered at a recent meeting of the Fees and Charges Sub Committee, and the recommendation was that the rent be reduced from £304 + VAT per calendar month to £250 + VAT, but that this continued to be paid quarterly, not on the requested monthly basis. Members **APPROVED** the recommendations from the Fees and Charges Sub Committee.

- **Copperworks Site**

The TSO informed members that in relation to the pending application for outline planning consent, the Planning Officer had now been provided with a copy of the report of Mr Steven Pound, Principal Building Control Surveyor, which he did not previously have. It was discussed that the site had been looked at in two phases but there was no intention to proceed with phase two at this time. It was confirmed that any change in relation to this would only occur following a resolution of full Town Council.