

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Facilities and Assets Committee meeting

Wednesday 7th November 2018

Present: Cllrs Michael Theodoulou (Chair), Peter Freeman, Robert John, Mrs Shirley Matthews, Mrs Lisa Mitchell, David Owens and Mrs Moira Thomas.

Non-members present: Cllrs Stephen James and Mrs Mary Wenman

In attendance: Kevin Williams (Technical Services Officer)

Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)

(Senior Citizen's Hall, Memorial Institute, Burry Port 6.30pm –8.45pm)

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs Karen Francis Morris. It was noted that Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell would be arriving late.

The Chair stated that he had been approached by Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman who had concerns regarding the proposed development of the upstairs room of the Memorial Institute and he had invited her to the meeting to outline them to the Committee.

Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman expressed concern that the Council was pushing ahead with developing the room as an Art Room without giving proper consideration to whether or not duplication of services in the community would take place.

Cllr Stephen James arrived and joined the meeting 6.32pm

Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman continued that she felt an audit of what activities were available in the community and of what the Council and community already had in terms of facilities should take place before committing to development with one aim in mind. She highlighted that the need to provide for different interest groups who were not catered for, the expected growth of the Council staff and the need for office space, the lack of an information centre for locals and tourists alike, or the possibility of having pop-up displays. She also noted that the access issues and solutions should form a part of the plan.

The TSO advised that to date all he had sought costings for was work that would need to be undertaken to make the room a usable space, such as stairs into the loft to improve access to the archive, provision of water and a sink in an alcove and the construction requirements for fire safety should an elevator or stairlift be installed. He added that any proposed use would also need to include a structural assessment for its suitability for the task

Members agreed that any intended use of the room would need to conform to Health and Safety requirements. There followed a discussion where members discussed historic costed plans for development work of the room, to be used as a youth centre or as office space. Some members urged caution that change of use was could affect how fire safety regulations

were implemented and others felt that converting them to office space could be viewed negatively by the community as an investment priority.

The Chair summed up the discussions to address the concerns raised to find a consensus and plan of action. He **PROPOSED** that the issue be dealt with in two phases as follows:

- i) Costings sought for the work needed on the room to bring it into any type of use that deal with the issues of disability access, fire safety, loft space access and any other relevant improvements.
- ii) For the Committee to look at the options available for use of the space.

He continued that a major discussion would be needed around that intended use and the associated costs when the time came. He raised the possibility of the space being used in the mean time for short term activities by the community and community groups, as had been done with the poppy pallet art work by Llanelli Arts Society.

Members indicated unanimously in favour of the Chairs proposal.

13. Consideration of an email received from the Woodland Trust in response to the Town Council's request for advice on tree planting in the Memorial Park.

The Chair stated that he had brought this agenda item forward so that Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman could contribute, as she had raised concerns on this matter also.

The email followed a response from the Woodland Trust indicating that they do not generally provide tree planting advice. The email was in response to an enquiry as to what they can help with, and it outlined a number of options including pack of trees for planting which community groups and schools could plant with land owner's permission, looking at substantial tree planting schemes working in partnership with Coed Cymru or working in partnership with them on a particular project.

Members discussed the possibility of working with Ysgol Parc y Tywyn to plant trees as a wind break for the new school and to plant new trees to replace those felled in the Memorial Park. Some members felt that it was for the school to decide on its plans and to approach the Council, but that it was amenable to working with them.

Members discussed tree planting in the Memorial park, and noted that the position of the sports clubs who hold the sub-lease, do not want trees planted in the park near to the pitches on advice from the Welsh Rugby Union for their pitch maintenance, although he noted that there were spaces away from the pitches that could be suitable, provided, they were not too near paths. He pointed out that the Rugby Club had committed to turn the space at the north of the park into a wild flower area as part of their responsibility to the environment which further reduced the areas available for planting trees. Some members therefore felt that planting trees in the park could be problematic.

Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell arrived and joined the meeting 6.49pm

There followed a discussion of the practice in other Town Council's in the area of a systematic approach to tree planting, which assessed the visual and ecological benefits of

planting in certain spaces, with members noting that this could be more beneficial than an ad hoc approach. It was noted that tree planting along the road route to the harbour had been suggested in the past. Members raised a concern that decisions and planning was going ahead when this type of issue fell into the remit of the Wellbeing of Future Generations forum on A Resilient Wales and it should therefore wait until the public can advise us on their priorities, although it was also noted that free expertise would benefit the forum to make an informed decision.

The Chair summed up the debate and all members indicated their approval of the position of the Committee as follows:

- i) Caution in relation to tree planting in the Memorial Park
- ii) Encourage Ysgol Parc y Tywyn to pursue the idea and to approach the Council for assistance if they wish
- iii) A planned and systematic approach to tree planting to be put to a task and finish group, which doesn't preclude seeking advice from those mentioned in the email from the Woodland Trust, and for the forum lead on A Resilient Wales (Cllr Bob Walpole) to be involved in that group.

Members were encouraged to join any of the forums that interested them as they needed membership.

Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman left the meeting at 6.56pm

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

No declarations were made.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Thursday 4th October 2018

No corrections were requested. The minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee held on Wednesday 4th October 2018 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

P2 (5) Re: Water testing

The TSO stated that it was a legal requirement it be done and that 5 quotes had now been received.

Members noted that in line with their decision at the previous meeting the Chair and TSO would decide on which to use based on the lowest tender option which provided the needed testing and training for staff.

ACTION: TSO and Chair

P3(5) re: lighting and CCTV

The TSO answered a query with regards the lighting confirming that it was specifically in reference to improvements at Burry Port Memorial Hall to tackle blind spots the existing cameras had.

P4(11) re: certification of hall users

Members were informed that although the kitchen facilities were our responsibilities as we do not provide the catering at events the responsibility for appropriate certification belongs to the hall user.

5. To consider the budget monitoring report

Copies of the report had been sent to members in advance of the meeting.

Members noted that the overall budget expenditure and income was expected to be around 50% for this time of year and the report showed both to be near this mark. It was highlighted that the SLA payments were not expected until the end of year.

There followed a discussion of the amount paid for water at the various properties with the TSO confirming that rainwater harvesting at the cemetery had reduced the bills there and that he was currently investigating which properties were metered and how.

There was a request for a greater breakdown of cleaning costs at the Hall which were expected in the next report.

ACTION: RFO

Members noted that the rates for the two buildings at the Copperworks site had been combined in this report which was why they appeared high.

A brief discussion took place around the costs for roof repair at Pembrey Memorial Hall with it being noted that the listed costs only related to temporary repairs and that more works would be required in the near future.

It was highlighted that the report did not yet show the additional income received from the asset transfers but the Chair would meet with the RFO to discuss how best to include that information.

ACTION: CHAIR and RFO

It was noted that a budget of £8000 had been set for the repayment of a loan that had yet to be taken out, and it was suggested that this could be used for virement if necessary.

6. Consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members – none Circulated

None had been received.

7. To receive a report on meetings of the Chairs Committee

No meeting had taken place so there was no report.

8. To receive a report from the Chair of the Burial Sub-Committee

Members were informed that a request for a memorial bench to be placed in the cemetery had been received recently. As a one off it had been agreed with a family who had mistakenly placed two memorial benches for the same deceased family member, for one to be re-dedicated in the name of the person from the recently received request. Once this had taken place the Sub-Committee had agreed for no more memorial benches to be placed in the cemetery as it was not a sustainable practice.

Members were also informed of planned actions in relation to one grave plot, after recent complaints.

9. Update on Asset Transfers

It was confirmed to members that the Big Lottery had given consent for the Harbourside play area development to go ahead and for ownership to be transferred. The Council was now able to instruct the developer accordingly.

There were no new developments in relation to the transfer of the land at Pembrey Memorial Hall, excluding the strip over which there was a contentious ownership to be settled between the Church in Wales and the County Council.

The Town Council had withdrawn its interest in the harbourside public conveniences and those adjacent to the train station after the County Council had revealed its plans. It was noted that many members had received messages from concerned residents that there should remain public conveniences in those areas. In relation to recent vandalism that was restricting the operation of them it was understood that this matter could be raised at a forthcoming meeting with the Heads of Regeneration and Leisure at the County Council by submitting any questions in advance.

10. Consideration of information received from Came and Company insurance company.

The information received contained advice for Councils on insurance requirements. Members noted the need to establish an Asset Register which needed to include the values of items should replacement be required, highlighting in particular the need to do so every two years. A Risk Assessment was required for each park and open space that the Council owned which needed annual appraisal, in addition to current inspections. It was noted that the work involved with establishing and maintaining these and other requirements was extensive and beyond current staffing capacity.

Members were informed that the Chairs Committee had previously met to discuss the issue of staffing and other urgent outstanding works required but no recommendation had been made as yet. It was noted that the issue was on the agenda of the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee and that there were a lot of options to consider.

There followed a discussion of the need for re-structuring with an eye to the future as the Council had not seen any significant change in 20 years. Some members felt that there was a strong need for delegated authority from the Town Council to its Committees while others

felt there were risks in doing so, and that provision of transparency of decision making was a necessity for that system to work. Many members expressed their belief that it would be essential to increase staffing resources to not only undertake the expected work but to maintain it once in place, it was also noted that a number of the essential work required had strict deadlines for completion, with some of that work yet to begin.

Members discussed the forthcoming streamlining recommendations from the Chairs Committee in relation to the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to enable the better delegation of authority in relation to spending.

11. Consideration of purchase of notice boards (referral from Town Council 17/10/18)

The TSO reported that he had produced rough costings for the works which suggested notice boards of a similar design and size would cost around £1000 each.

Members discussed the size of the boards and the role they played in 21st century public engagement with the existence of social media and websites. It was also noted that a new notice board was required at the cemetery to display its rules and regulations. Many felt that the intended content of each board should be a crucial factor in deciding on the size of the board. Some expressed that the boards did not require replacing and merely needed repair and refurbishment.

Following this discussion members **AGREED** for the existing boards to be repaired and refurbished with new pin-boards and “glass” in the doors. Members also **AGREED** for the Burials Sub-Committee to look at the intended content for the cemetery notice board to advise the Facilities and Assets Committee on the required size before it was purchased.

ACTION: TSO and BURIALS

12. Consideration of an email received from a local resident regarding charges for Pembrey Memorial Hall

The Council had received a complaint from a local resident with regard the charges being raised for the hire of the Hall by the Scouts and Cubs, as being too high. Members discussed the figure charged and noted that as a local charitable group they received the lowest rate and also benefitted from a 35% discount through being a regular hirer. It had been calculated that what they were charged did not even cover half of the costs that the Council incurred for running the Hall.

In the following discussion it was noted that the Council had a policy in place not to make exceptions for any users to ensure fairness for all. Some members also wished to express that a response should mention that the Council was proud of the support it had given and continued to give the Scouts and Cubs and highlight that the group have benefitted from grants from the Council too.

Members **AGREED** for the Chair to respond to the email explaining that the Council could not make it any cheaper and that it was proud of the support they give to the Cubs and Scouts.

ACTION: CHAIR and OFFICE

13. Consideration of an email received from the Woodland Trust in response to the Town Council's request for advice on tree planting in the Memorial Park.

This item had been addressed earlier in the meeting.

14. Update on the sale of Copperworks

The TSO reported that he was in communication with the Council's solicitor (Roderick's Solicitors, Llanelli) and that the property was now advertised and was available to view online also. There were no reports yet as to potential interest, and it was noted that the property was on the market for £95,000.

15. To consider the prioritisation of investment in assets.

Members were informed that the Council had delayed taking out the loan of £100,000 due to a number of factors and that the Chair was working with the TSO to produce a list of priority works and improvements that it could be spent on.

The TSO read out the list as it currently stood, noting that there was undoubtedly more to add.

- Replacement/upgrade to doors in the Memorial Institute buildings (£13,000)
- Fitting access ramps, improved lighting and fire detection and windows at Pembrey Memorial Hall (£8,000)
- Structural repairs at rear of Burry Port Memorial Hall (c.£1000 per metre, 20m required). This may be offset with costs to insert a canopy extension on the wall and making improvements to access/egress too.
- Re-rendering of Memorial Institute building (£10,000)
- Minimum requirements to bring the upstairs room of the Memorial Institute into use (£30,000)
- Cosmetic and internal improvements to Pembrey Memorial Hall (£30,000)
- Playground equipment replacement and repairs (£3,000 + any ongoing costs)
- Water testing and improvements (£2,000)

Members noted that the list did not yet include other works they had talked about previously, including improvements to the Tennis Courts and parking at Pembrey Memorial Hall, or the potential systematic tree planting regime. Concern was expressed that unless action was taken soon, then the costs of repair works could become untenable.

The Chair **PROPOSED** that he and the TSO continue to produce the list of works to spend on and to create a reserve list of additional works.

In the following discussion it was suggested that the Chair and TSO prioritise the works into three categories, what is legally required, improvements to the rear of the Memorial Institute and anything else. It was noted that final approval would be required from the Town Council but to produce the list did not. Members discussed that the Council was facing another precept increase in the next budget noting that not all of those works could be covered by that but may be able to assist, some members felt that it may be necessary to take out a larger loan to undertake the work, noting that that would require a larger amount in repayment.

Members **AGREED** to the proposal by the Chair.

ACTION TSO and CHAIR

16. To consider the purchase of chairs for Pembrey Memorial Hall

The TSO highlighted that at present there was a mix of seating at the site with some in better condition than others. He had got some prices for padded chairs but needed more advice before continuing.

Members discussed the urgency of this work given the discussion under the previous item agenda, with some highlighting that the Hall was increasingly in use which made this an increased priority. It was noted that it would be beneficial to purchase the same style of chairs as were at Burry Port Memorial Hall to allow continuity should they need to be moved around. Some members questioned whether the seating should take priority at the Hall over the other works such as the kitchen improvements. It was suggested that the Council could look to hire chairs as required until a purchase could be made.

All members **AGREED** that the Council should hire for the time being.

ACTION: TSO

17. To consider any referred matters (if any)

None were raised

18. Any other urgent business at the discretion of the Chair

Members raised concerns over storage issues at Burry Port Memorial Hall, in particular the conditions and safety of using the available space. Members **AGREED** for Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews to accompany the TSO during a tour of assessment.

ACTION: TSO and CLLR MATTHEWS

Members also **AGREED** for the cleaner to be instructed to undertake an urgent clean of those areas in advance of the Remembrance Concert

ACTION: TSO

In camera - That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.