

**Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council**  
**Facilities Management Committee meeting**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018**

**Present: Chair Cllr Michael Theodoulou, Cllrs Geraint Davies, Mrs Linda Edwards, Peter Freeman, John Hedley Jones, Mrs Lisa Mitchell, Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, David Owens and Bob Walpole.**

**Non-members present: Cllrs Mrs Amanda Fox and John James**

**In attendance: Mrs Melanie Carroll-Cliffe (Town Clerk)**

**Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)**

**(Meeting room, Memorial Hall, Burry Port 9.30am – 11.05am)**

Before proceeding with the agenda Cllrs Mrs Amanda Fox and John James were asked to speak to the Committee in relation the Litter Picking Group whom they had met recently.

Cllr John James reported that although the group had started as a Town Council initiative a number of years ago, it had since operated on its own and with Carmarthenshire County Council. With forthcoming changes at County level, the Council would no longer provide insurance cover for the group. They therefore wished to return under the umbrella of the Town Council, so as to continue their voluntary work. As a group they have a committee structure with a Chair and a person acting as a Secretary.

Cllr John James clarified that the group only worked in the Pembrey and Burry Port area and that they had calculated their insurance cover to amount to £50 a year. He added that the group would require high visibility vests and gloves to undertake the work safely but they would be happy to have the Council logo on the back. In response to a query he confirmed that it was public liability insurance he had been referring to.

The Clerk responded that she had recently been meeting with insurers in relation to policy renewal, and that they had stated their preference for there to be a separate policy for groups like these, but that if Councillors were heavily involved, it may be possible to get a special addition onto the Town Council's policy.

The Chair stated that in principle this group needed the Council's support, but that the way of working needed to be clear. He asked if the group would remain a separate organisation or become a part of the Town Council's activities, and added that the Council could provide support to them in either circumstance.

Cllr John James stated that the group wished to keep matters as simple as possible, as their main aim was to collect litter. In response to a query, he confirmed that the County Council would continue to provide the necessary bags and that they were also prepared to collect them with sufficient notice.

There followed a discussion where it was suggested that the current working model between the group and County Council could be used as a template. Questions were also put forward asking for more detail on what the group wanted, and whether or not children would be involved.

The Chair reminded members that Cllrs Mrs Amanda Fox and John James were asking for a decision in principle with the detail to be confirmed later.

Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell asked if responsibility for the group would rest with the Facilities Management Committee or with the Regeneration and Community Services Committee and whether representatives of the group could be invited to attend and address the respective Committee to give a better breakdown.

Cllr John James did not believe the group members would be able to provide much more detail than he had already given.

There followed a discussion as to whether the decision to establish the future working relationship with the group was delegated to the Facilities Management Committee or if it would have to be decided by the full Town Council, but no consensus could be reached.

Cllr Mrs Amanda Fox stated that the group had mentioned that Keep Wales Tidy provided insurance cover for litter picking groups and that could be looked at as an option when the detailed discussions take place.

In conclusion, the Chair stated that Cllrs Mrs Amanda Fox and John James could inform the group that the Town Council agreed in principle to support them but that the details would need to be agreed.

### **Cllrs Mrs Amanda Fox and John James departed the meeting at 9.40am**

#### **1. Personal matters**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews.

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

Cllrs Mrs Karen Francis-Morris and Bob Walpole declared an interest in agenda item 13 due to their membership of the Heritage Group.

#### **3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January were approved as a true record.

#### **4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes**

P1 (3) - to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017

In response to a query from the Chair, the Clerk confirmed that in relation to the white goods requiring action, the dishwasher had been plumbed in but there remained a query on where the washing machine was to be installed as there was no room in the bar area as had been instructed.

In the following discussion it was agreed to ask the TSO to look into the matter and advise the Committee on where, if anywhere it could be installed.

**ACTION: TSO**

In response to a query from Cllr Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, the Clerk responded that the cleaning company had undertaken the work on the 31<sup>st</sup> January but that they were yet to be inspected.

Cllr Mrs Karen Francis-Morris also queried if the bins had yet been replaced and if the toilets had been assessed. The Clerk confirmed that she would make the necessary arrangements.

**Cllr Peter Freeman left the meeting at 9.50am**

In response to a query, the Clerk advised that the replacement CCTV cameras were being actioned.

**Cllr Peter Freeman returned to the meeting at 9.52am**

**5. Consideration of the Committee's budget monitoring report**

The Chair introduced the report which covered up until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and highlighted a number of items from it. He stated that the income was ahead of its target, and therefore was of no concern.

Expenditure was shown as being on target but there were a number of known payments yet to come and virements were also needed. He stated that the following highlighted items needed a decision on where the virement would come from:

Cemetery/footpaths

- Electrical maintenance £1,505
- Remembrance gardens £300

Hall & Institute

- Equipment – Halls £1,421
- Contingency £1,673

The Clerk clarified that when this Committee makes a referral to the Finance Committee, if it is agreed, the process is to look to vire the required money from within the Committee's budgets in the first instance before anything is drawn from reserves. Without a decision the RFO cannot allocate the money until the end of the financial year.

The Chair responded that the Committee would have benefited from the RFO's advice on where the virements can be made, as the Committee was uncertain about what money was

committed where. He suggested that he as Chair, could meet with the RFO to ensure a timely decision was made.

All Members indicated their approval of this suggestion

**ACTION: CHAIR**

There followed a discussion where it was clarified that to offset the virements using the income would require approval of the Finance Committee as a budget increase. Members raised concern that the number of virements that were under discussion across all Committees may indicate poor planning and budget management. In response the Chair stated that the fault in part lay in the Committee not having set a budget for “Planned Maintenance”, and that this issue would continue until such a heading was created.

Cllr David Owens stated that in relation to the “Electrical Maintenance” virement, he felt the decision on where the virement would come from should have been made when it was approved, as the Committee should be ready to make a sacrifice on some budgets so that it doesn’t have to depend on reserves at the end of the year.

Some Members indicated their support for listing scheduled and unscheduled budgets as well as setting contingencies in place. The Chair responded that ideas like those needed to be borne in mind during future planning and budget setting.

## **6. Update on budget setting for the 2018/19 financial year.**

The Chair began discussions on the agenda item by asking the Committee that as there was currently no budget set for contingency in the budget papers, did they wish to include it in their recommendations.

Members agreed this would be a good idea and a discussion followed about how much would be appropriate. A figure that amounted to 10% of the total budget was put forward as being suitable, which would amount to £5000. This was **AGREED** unanimously.

Cllr Geraint Davies enquired whether or not the budget included sufficient funds for the upcoming proposed safety works. The Clerk responded that it had been included but confirmed that the discussions had not considered work necessary for the Copperworks Band Room or Pembrey Memorial Hall.

Cllr Geraint Davies stated that he would liaise with the Clerk and RFO to provide appropriate figures for the work needed across all facilities, for the RFO to include in the final budget papers.

The Chair discussed the increase to the precept as shown by the budget setting documents would amount to £0.43 per person per week.

There followed a discussion of what other precept increases the community was facing from Carmarthenshire County Council and other services, although no certain figures were as yet known. Members were reminded that the increase the Town Council was imposing would be a small fraction of the total bill cost, but was necessary to ensure facilities and assets such as the Park remained available to the public.

## **7. Update on the heating system at Pembrey Memorial Hall.**

In relation to the requested quotes for mains gas options at Pembrey Memorial Hall, the Clerk provided details of the 1<sup>st</sup> quote that had been returned so far, which amounted to £49,250.

In the following discussion it was highlighted that the costs was very high, but was related to necessary changes to the whole infrastructure of the system as fewer changes would be required to update the system for oil or gas storage. No certainty could be got as to what the life expectancy of the various heating systems under consideration are.

The Chair stated that although the matter was urgent, he advised that the Council should wait until the TSO was available to commission an expert report to provide sufficient information for the Committee to discuss.

## **8. Update on asset transfers**

The Clerk informed the Committee that she was hoping to receive a third quote in relation to the conveyancing after the meeting. She asked if the Committee would like her to liaise with the Chair once the quote was received.

The Chair stated he felt it should be referred to the Chairs Committee. He also updated the Committee on the harbourside play area as follows:

- Many meetings with Cllrs John James and Mrs Amanda Fox on choosing the right developer.
- By next week quotes from 3 or 4 companies will have been discussed.
- The land in question for the development is yet to be acquired by the Town Council.

The Committee **AGREED** that the Council should make a request to the County Council for the land around the harbourside conveniences needed for the play area, on a 99 year lease agreement.

It was also noted that the County Council would no longer be paying an SLA for the maintenance of the Memorial Gardens and that the Council would prefer to have input in the maintenance and presentation of them. There were no objections raised to asking for the Memorial Gardens to be included in the asset transfer requests. The matter was referred to the Chairs Committee for a decision.

**ACTION: CHAIRS COMMITTEE**

## **9. Update on the purchase of a musical keyboard for use by organisations in the Senior Citizens' Hall**

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Dementia Carers Group had since obtained a musical keyboard for their own use. The Council's decision to investigate purchasing a keyboard had been made to benefit all facilities users but recognising that the Dementia Carer's Group would be primary users.

A discussion followed as to whether the item was an immediate necessity or a useful addition. It was noted that no other groups had made a request for such an item and that

deferring the purchase for a future budget would necessitate allowing for such a purchase in that budget.

The Committee **AGREED** to defer the purchase of a musical keyboard for the future.

Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell raised that a number of other items had been requested by regular Hall users which she considered were more urgently required. She had priced up the items as follows:

- 3x Music stands           £165
- 3x microphones           £240

The Committee were agreed this purchase was necessary for performances to continue in the Hall. The Chair asked the Committee to approve a budget of £350 with the details to be agreed during a planned meeting between himself and the RFO.

The Committee **APPROVED** the budget.

**ACTION: CHAIR**

It was suggested that the TSO, once in post, be asked to ensure all Council property was securely marked.

**ACTION: TSO**

## **10. Feedback from recent Chairs' meetings**

The Chair updated the Committee on the recent meeting between the Chairs and Cllr Peter Freeman to discuss the restructuring as instructed by the Town Council.

Most of the structure had been agreed with only 1 issue being controversial, namely County Councillors being exempt from Chairing Town Council committees. The matter was voted on with 4 in favour of the exemption and 1 against.

The meeting had discussed the increased workload the new structure will place on office staff and discussed mitigating factors. Suggestion to reduce the length of time to produce minutes by producing more streamlined versions. The plan was to produce two versions of minutes for one meeting to provide a comparison

The membership of the new committees would be looked at during the next meeting on Monday the 5<sup>th</sup> February. The Chair confirmed there were already flexible guidelines for the number of members each committee should have. At that meeting it was also planned to discuss the recent emails received from Mr Lee Fox and to decide what, if any response the Council should make, as the accusations it made were serious.

## **11. Consideration of potential changes to members' services, such as the introduction of individual Councillor email addresses and changes to the method of distribution of papers.**

The costs of providing email addresses to Councillors as being £600 for 18 but there was a possibility they may be secured for less or even free.

It was discussed that dedicated Council email addresses would help address confidentiality issues and the need for a step-by-step guide to assist Councillors.

There followed a discussion of the provision of tablet devices for Councillors to help reduce the amount of paper that is produced. There was strong support to reduce those amounts. Concerns were raised about obsolescence, and the large expense incurred for replacing. Lease/hire options were discussed also, although it was noted that the planned use would not be likely to affect the performance much over time. It was suggested that Councillors would benefit from having MS Office programmes to enable their work and for a programme such as “Cysyllt” for basic Welsh translation needs.

Other benefits of electronic delivery of minutes and papers were noted including reduced impact on staff time for production and delivery.

**12. To consider arrangements to facilitate the hire of Burry Port Memorial Hall by BBC Wales (referral from Town Council meeting of 17/01/18)**

The Clerk informed the Committee that the BBC’s plans to access the Hall were dependent on closing a number of nearby parking bays and that such a disruption needed their approval. The Clerk was instructed to contact the proper authorities to make the necessary arrangements.

Cllr Mrs Karen Francis Morris **PROPOSED** that the Clerk communicate with local businesses and residents to inform them of the disruption also, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman.

Members **AGREED** to the proposal.

A different potential solution was put forward in accessing the Council parking facilities via the Surgery car park and the Clerk was asked to put the suggestion to the BBC team for consideration.

It was also noted that the invoice made reference to “payment to County Council” and that the Clerk should ensure it was amended.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**13. To consider the disposal of land at the Copperworks site upon which outline planning consent has been obtained.**

The Clerk had no updates to provide.

The Chair asked members to note that there was a significant increase in workload placed on the office due to the number and nature of Freedom of Information requests coming in, as well as from emails, phone calls and meetings. He stated that they could not expect the Clerk to meet all her other workload given this increase.

**Cllr Peter Freeman left the meeting at 11.00am**

The Chair added that he would have more to update the Committee with once he had met with the Heritage Group on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**14. To consider referred matters from any other Committee (if any)**

There were no referred matters.

The Clerk informed members that she had submitted the application for the Best Tourism initiative for the One Voice Wales Awards, and that another had been prepared for Best Tourism Initiative for submission soon.