

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Minutes Regeneration and Community Services Committee Meeting

Wednesday 4th October 2017

Present: Chair Cllr Robert John, Peter Freeman, Mrs Lisa Mitchell (Vice Chair), Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, Michael Theodoulou, Mrs Moira Thomas and Mrs Mary Wenman

In attendance: Melanie Carroll-Cliffe (Town Clerk), Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant-Minute Taker)

Meeting Room, Memorial Hall, Burry Port 10.30am – 12.45pm

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Services Committee meeting held on Thursday 18th July 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18th July 2017 were approved as a true record.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

P1 (4) [P2 (4) Matters arising]

A query was raised in relation to the youth club held at Glan y Mor School and the issues surrounding its availability and the priority given to school matters ahead of community use. Cllr Mrs Moira Thomas wished to know if the Town Council were in a position to make demands of the school given the Town Council's previous financial support during the establishment of the youth club.

There was discussion among the members and they agreed that the issue stemmed from a disagreement between two different departments of the County Council and their respective financial arrangements. It should not therefore be up to the Town Council to further support them financially.

It was stated that the Town Council had taken the decision to award money previously but that they had not placed any conditions on that, to enable it to call the school or youth club to account for their spending.

There was a discussion about how the school makes use of the facilities as a classroom and other purposes and Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell stated that the school is also dictating how it may be used and decorated.

The Clerk interjected to state that the school's Headteacher and Business Manager would be in attendance at the meeting at a later point to clarify these matters in person and explain the situation and pressures they are facing. It was therefore agreed that it was preferable to listen to what the school's representatives had to say on the issue.

P2 (4) [P3 (9) to consider the possibility of arranging a "Super PACT" meeting]

Cllr Mrs Moira Thomas enquired if any dates had yet been set for the meeting.

The Clerk advised that she had now received some potential dates for a meeting between Town Councillors and the Police and Crime Commissioner, although a definite date was yet to be agreed. However, it had been indicated that the Chief Constable would not be in attendance.

5. Consideration of the Committee's Budget Monitoring report

The Chair gave an overview of the report highlighting that the Committee had spent 38% of its budget to date.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou enquired how much reliance could be placed on the report, as it only showed information up to the end of August.

In response, the Clerk confirmed that she was aware of a number of payments which were yet to appear in the report but that this was the most recent report from the RFO.

There was a discussion about the necessity for Council Members to have access to more detailed breakdowns of the items, particularly in relation to contributions, to ensure their decisions were as accurate as possible, and for the information to be provided promptly.

In relation to the item under Expenditure marked "Xmas lights and competition", Cllr Michael Theodoulou asked for clarification as to why the Committee was working to the same budget as previous years, as when a decision had been taken the previous year to hire lights, it was on the understanding that it would result in a reduction in that budget.

It was further discussed by the members that they required a more detailed breakdown of the Income elements as well as the Expenditure items, as without that extra information they could not be certain they were spending appropriately.

6. To consider applications received for financial donations

The Clerk outlined details of the following applications:

Cylch Meithrin

The Clerk informed the Committee that this was the first time that an application had been received from the Cylch Meithrin and assistance was being sought in relation to their general running costs. The application emphasised that they were a popular Welsh language service that had been very successful in the past. The request is due to them seeing a recent reduction in attendance, believed to be due to the provision of a free service (Flying Start scheme) in Burry Port Community Primary School.

There was much discussion of the wider situation among the members, including details of how the Flying Start scheme works. Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell stated that she had been approached by several people in relation to this, and that Ysgol Parc y Tywyn had started to notice an effect on the numbers of their intake too, due to the discrepancy between the ages children can start at the schools (3 years at Burry Port Community Primary due to the Flying Start scheme running from there, and 4 years at Parc Y Tywyn). Some parents were taking advantage of the free provision and then not wishing to disrupt their children's lives by moving them to a new school.

It was understood that Cllr Hugh Shepardson was already in discussion with the County Council in relation to this matter, but had not yet had a chance to report back to the Town Council.

Cllr Mrs Moira Thomas stated that assurances had been given by the County Council that placing the Flying Start scheme within Burry Port Community School would not negatively affect Parc Y Tywyn.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee refer the matter (surrounding the impact Flying Start is having on the schools in the community) to a full Council meeting to discuss producing a strongly worded letter to the County Council. This proposal was **APPROVED**.

There was a discussion about whether or not the Committee was able to award money to help meet running costs. The Clerk advised members that the Cylch Meithrin were running schemes and putting into place other plans to assist with the current difficulties.

Following the discussions, members **APPROVED** a community grant of £1,000. However, for any further applications they would need to submit to the Committee their accounts if they are a charity, not just their bank statements, and also a business plan.

Burry Port Town Band

The Clerk outlined the request for £1,000 to help support the band and youth band in staging the forthcoming West Wales Brass Festival to be held in the Memorial Hall. In their accompanying letter, they gave a detailed breakdown of the event costs (total £3,900).

The requested sum is larger than that granted in previous years, but the members agreed that the event had no doubt grown given the popularity of previous years, and recognised the significant positive impact that it had upon local businesses.

Following discussions, a community grant of £1,000 was **APPROVED**.

Burry Port Bowls Club

The Clerk outlined the two applications for consideration. One was a deferred matter from a previous meeting, for the purchase of a large mower (£650) and the other was in relation to purchasing new bowling green mats (£225).

A query was raised as to whether the club undertook any local fundraising, to which the Clerk advised that she was aware that they had obtained some local sponsorship

Cllr Michael Theodoulou emphasised that the club would soon be run as a municipal facility. Therefore, if the grants were not awarded, the items would still have to be purchased by the Town Council. He also stated that it had been agreed that there would be a new Bowls Club Sub-Committee.

Following discussions, the two applications were **APPROVED**.

Pembrey Community Growing Club

The Clerk outlined that this was another deferred matter and she provided the requested clarification that the trees had not yet been paid for. Given this clarification, the Committee **APPROVED** the donation of £200.

Young Farmer's Club

The Clerk informed the Committee of the request from the Club, which is sent every year but relates to running the Club at a national level rather than locally. This makes the request ineligible from the Town Council's standpoint and it was therefore **REFUSED**.

Local resident to attend Kickboxing finals

The Clerk informed the Committee of a letter received from a local resident, who was seeking financial support to enable her son to represent Wales at a national kickboxing competition. The funds were required to pay for equipment, travel and accommodation. The Clerk also reminded members that the Council's current policy precluded donations to individuals.

It was discussed that the Town Council would need to consider if it wished to change its policy on donations. It was therefore **AGREED** that the matter be referred to the Town Council.

Dementia Carers' Support Group

The Clerk informed the Committee that there was a deferred application, as further information had been required. To date, no additional information was available.

It was discussed that a project to work towards a 'Dementia Friendly' community should be run jointly by the group and the Town Council, so as to contribute to the Council's responsibilities under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. It was therefore agreed that there would need to be a discussion with the group.

7. Update on Wales in Bloom events

It was discussed that Pembrey and Burry Port had again won the town category in this year's Wales in Bloom campaign, having been awarded the gold award. Also, the Sub-Committee had received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the organisation and members of the public.

All members agreed that the hosting events had been a great success and gave their congratulations to the Sub-Committee for the achievement. Cllrs Mrs Moira Thomas and Mrs Shirley Matthews were singled out in particular for all of their effort and hard work in the arrangements.

It was discussed that looking forward, there should be a cost/benefit assessment of the work that goes in to the Wales in Bloom campaign, so that continued investment can be reviewed appropriately.

The Chair stated that the Sub-Committee should meet to discuss this further and bring their findings back to the Committee.

Due to the arrival of the Headteacher of Glan Y Mor (Mr R P Jones) and the school's Business Manager (Mrs D Booth), the Committee agreed to consider item 10 on the agenda out of order.

10. To consider issues relating to the youth club facility at Glan y Mor School

Mr R P Jones and Mrs D Booth were invited to speak to the Committee. Mr Jones began by thanking the Council for its support in the school's success of changing its fortunes and Estyn rating and stated he wished to speak about the management of the youth facilities. The youth facilities are there to benefit the community not just the school and are in fact being utilised by pupils from across the County. The financial capital that the Town Council provided to establish the facilities have been much appreciated. They do however need help with running costs to sustain what is currently provided and improve for the future. Mr Jones recognised that financial resources were limited everywhere and he had no expectations for the Council to directly provide funding for running costs, but was seeking to set up a support network to help the community access funding to do so and perhaps even to pay for improvements.

Mr Jones highlighted that the suggested network may be an opportunity to extend the impact of the facility to include wider sporting facilities. He advised that he had been approached by a number of sporting teams. Mr Jones also stated that this could be an opportunity to support children in their transition from primary to secondary education.

A query was raised regarding occasions when the Youth Club has been denied use of the facilities due to school events and activities taking place which have been given priority. Mr Jones confirmed that there had been a small number of occasions but stressed that other facilities within the school were made available or an alternative night offered.

There were discussions about the possibility of a management group being formed. Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that a small joint team with representation from the Youth Service, Glan y Mor School and the Town Council (this committee) set up a body and he indicated that he was happy to assist in producing a constitution. Mr Jones stated that with the growing regional developments with the creation of the Swansea Bay City Region there were likely to be plenty of funds available. Cllr Michael Theodoulou suggested that the team could also look to apply to organisations such as the Big Lottery Fund very quickly for up to £10,000. Cllr Robert John seconded the proposal, which was unanimously **APPROVED**. Mr Jones confirmed that he would liaise with Youth Services and revert to the Committee.

In closing, Mr Jones extended an invitation to the Council to attend the school's prize evening on 18th October.

Cllr Mrs Moira Thomas thanked the school for the assistance with Wales in Bloom. She also enquired if any progress had yet been made in having pupils attend Council meetings, and was informed the matter is still in discussion.

Mr Jones and Mrs Booth left the meeting following the conclusion of discussions on this agenda item.

8. To consider Christmas lighting

The Clerk reminded members that the Council is tied in to hire arrangements for three years, this

being the second year. She informed the committee that it needed to decide whether it continued with the level of lighting it had at present or whether it wished to expand to have more lighting.

Cllr Mrs Mary Wenman left the meeting during the discussion of this item at 12 noon.

The Chair enquired as to the installation costs, to which the Clerk advised that she was aware that they were significantly less than in previous years.

Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell stated that the Christmas Carnival was growing as an event and that the Town Council should support that growth. She emphasised the importance of the lighting and suggested that consideration be given to expanding it at the harbour.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou stated that the lighting was clearly of benefit to the community but that without better clarity on the budgets and contributions, decisions are difficult to make. He recognised that the reduced costs could allow the Committee to expand its lighting contribution. He further expressed concern that so much reliance was placed on a voluntary organisation, namely the Carnival Committee.

There followed a discussion about the arrangements between the Carnival Committee and the Town Council, particularly in relation to the financial contributions each makes to the other.

The Chair, Cllr Robert John referred to a suggestion that he had raised two years ago regarding the Council seeking donations for specific objectives.

The Clerk reminded the Committee of the limited time to prepare for this year's Christmas lights switch on. Members felt that progress would best be made in meeting with representatives of the Carnival Committee.

It was agreed that Cllrs Robert John, Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, Michael Theodoulou and Mrs Moira Thomas be in attendance from this Committee and that Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews should liaise with the Carnival Committee regarding their representatives, following her return from holiday.

9. To consider members' ideas for potential future community events

The Chair suggested that the meeting which is to take place with the Carnival Committee could be of assistance in relation to ideas for future events.

Cllr Peter Freeman suggested that events could be arranged to mark January 16th (Dydd Gwyl Santes Dwynwen) and March 1st (Dydd Gwyl Dewi).

Cllr Mrs Lisa Mitchell also suggested that events could be organised to help the Council raise funds to undertake remedial work at Pembrey Hall. She recognised this may be better dealt with by the Facilities Management Committee but felt that consideration of the fundraising events warranted discussion by this Committee also. Her suggestions included a sponsored walk for Halloween, a Christmas twmpath dance in the hall itself and a Christmas concert in St Mary's Church.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou suggested that there needed to be an Events Sub-Committee. This could liaise with the Carnival Committee and others. He also expressed a view that if the Council intends arranging a lot more events, then it may be feasible to employ an events manager.

Following the discussions, it was agreed that the Events Sub-Committee comprise of the following members: Cllrs Robert John, Peter Freeman, Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, Michael Theodoulou and Mrs Moira Thomas.

11. To consider any referred matters from the other Committees (if any)

There were no matters referred from other Committees.