

CARMARTHEN TOWN COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON 16TH DECEMBER 2015

The Mayor, Cllr Barry Williams, presided over the monthly meeting of Carmarthen Town Council held in the Council Chamber, St Peter's Civic Hall, on Wednesday, 16th December 2015, at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Dorothy Bere, Reverend Tom Defis, Dr Richard Edwards, Philip Grice, Peter Hughes Griffiths, Anthony Jenkins, Angharad Jones Leefe, Alun Lenny, Kenneth Lloyd, Emlyn Schiavone, Alan Speake, Wyn Thomas and Barry Williams

340. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Dr Baba Gana, Arwel Lloyd, Dr Ioan Matthews and Douglas Rose.

341. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Alun Lenny declared an interest in agenda item 10(a), Current Planning Applications, as Chairman of Carmarthenshire County Council Planning Committee.

Cllrs Philip Grice and Emlyn Schiavone declared an interest in agenda item 9(a), Dr Mz Youth Project – Funding, as Town Council representatives on the Dr Mz management committee.

Cllr Emlyn Schiavone also declared an interest in agenda item 8, minutes of the Finance Committee held on the 8th December 2015, as the father of two sons who have an electrical business in the locality.

342. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2015

It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on the 25th November 2015 be accepted as a true record.

343. MATTERS ARISING

No matters arose.

344. QUESTIONS

No questions were reported.

345. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2015

It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the General

Purposes Committee held on the 8th December 2015 be signed and accepted as a true record.

346. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 319: 2016-17 Council Tax Policing Precept

Members agreed with the Finance Committee, and cited anecdotal evidence of increased crime in 2015, particularly assaults, drunkenness and anti-social behaviour.

It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk write to the Police Commissioner to:

- (i) state that the Town Council has noted that, since the decreased police precept, some services have been withdrawn or reduced, such as monitoring of CCTV and the local availability of the police helicopter, and
- (ii) seek comparative figures on crime in Carmarthen, before and after the cuts.

(b) Minute 323: Council Website

Members agreed with the Town Clerk's proposals to the Finance Committee for a more dynamic and interactive website. In response to Cllr Angharad Jones Leefe, the Town Clerk confirmed that Council would respond bilingually to comments on social media.

Cllr Anthony Jenkins emphasised the diversity of communities in Carmarthen, and suggested that introduction of other languages to the website (e.g. Polish) would reflect this diversity, and recognise the contribution made to Carmarthen by those who have chosen to make their home in the town.

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Emlyn Schiavone, and **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Council's website is upgraded as per the Town Clerk's report to the Finance Committee, at a one-off cost of £1,900 (nineteen hundred pounds), and
- (ii) the Town Clerk will present options for introducing other languages, such as Polish, to Council's website.

347. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2015

It was proposed by Cllr Referend Tom Defis, seconded by Cllr Dr Richard Edwards, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Finance Committee held on the 8th December 2015 be signed and accepted as a true record, subject to the following correction:

Minute 338, last paragraph, penultimate sentence: deletion of *‘and the donation would be discontinued if the Lottery bid is successful’.*

348. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 338: Dr Mz Youth Project

Members united in their support for the Dr Mz Youth Project. Some urged Council to earmark £1,000 per month to ensure that Dr Mz remains open. Others doubted whether the Town Council is empowered to make substantial donations to Dr Mz, when other community groups such as Tŷ Ni – Tŷ Hapus could argue that they are equally deserving of large scale support. Members noted that Lottery grants cannot fund the Youth Project’s day-to-day running costs. Also, the search for funds is diverting Dr Mz staff from their main purpose of helping the town’s youth.

As information, the Town Clerk reminded Members that they had received copies of the Dr Mz annual accounts and business plan, that between 2009 and 2015 Council had donated £7,000 to Dr Mz, and that if Council decides to donate £12,000 to Dr Mz in 2016/17 this would need to be factored into next year’s budget (either from Council’s reserves or by increasing the precept or by cancelling other work). The Town Clerk also advised Members to invite a representative of Dr Mz to the Finance Committee to talk through their finances.

A lengthy discussion revolved around:

- is the Town Council empowered to financially support Dr Mz?
- has Dr Mz formally applied for further financial support?
- does the Town Council have enough detailed and recent information on the Dr Mz finances to inform the debate?
- does the Code of Conduct permit Town Councillors who represent the Town Council on an outside body to speak on behalf of that body when the Town Council considers financial aid?

The recommendation of the Finance Committee was overtaken by a counter-proposal by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and it was **RESOLVED** (by seven votes in favour, four votes against, one abstention and one no vote) that:

- (i) the Town Clerk will ask the Chair of Dr Mz to submit a formal application for grant aid, if needed,
- (ii) the Town Clerk will ask the Chair of Dr Mz to submit a financial update, revised business plan, and financial projections from now until the end of the current financial year,

- (iii) the Finance Committee will review the Dr Mz finances on a monthly basis until the end of the current financial year, unless the Lottery decision is known before then, and
- (iv) the Town Clerk will ask the County Council's legal staff, and other relevant organisations, whether a Town Councillor who represents the Town Council on an outside body is allowed to speak on behalf of that body during a debate on financial aid.

(b) Minute 339: Christmas Toybox Appeal

The Town Clerk has received County Council confirmation that monetary gifts are used to buy new toys, not for administration.

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Dr Richard Edwards, and **RESOLVED** that the Mayor will donate one hundred pounds to the County Council's Christmas Toybox Appeal, and will make the presentation in person.

349. PLANNING MATTERS – CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

With the Chairman's consent, the Town Clerk tabled the following County Council planning notice, which was **NOTED**:

W/33068, Land at St David's Park, Job's Well Road, proposed car park for 55 vehicles, for use by staff during working hours, full planning.

350. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

With the Chairman's consent, Cllr Alan Speake reported that traffic from Lammas Street along Water Street is severely restricted by the lights. Only three cars can emerge before the lights change, and angry drivers are crossing the junction on amber. Cllr Wyn Thomas reported a similar problem in Johnstown.

The reports of Members were **NOTED**, and County Councillors will monitor the traffic situation at Water Street and Johnstown.

351. LICENSING MATTERS

No licensing matters were reported.

352. REVIEW OF ANNUAL COUNCIL EVENTS

The Town Clerk's report had emphasised the need for Council's events to be properly reviewed, to ensure that agreed changes are implemented in future years. Cllr Alan Speake, as Chairman of the Carmarthen Branch of the Royal British Legion, congratulated Town Council Members and staff on the way they had supported the town's remembrance ceremonies.

Members **RESOLVED** to give feedback to the Town Clerk about Council's recent high profile events:

- Remembrance Day Parade and Ceremony
- Fireworks Display at Carmarthen Park
- Christmas Lights 'Switch on' (13th November)
- Reindeer Parade and Father Christmas 'grotto' (21st November)

353. DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) BILL

The Town Clerk's report had advised Council that the Minister for Public Services is consulting on the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill, which sets out the Welsh Government's proposals for local government reform.

It was proposed by Cllr Alun Lenny, seconded by Cllr Philip Grice, and **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the Town Clerk will arrange a presentation for Council on the 27th January 2016 on the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill,
- (b) following that presentation, Members will discuss the Bill in detail and prepare a joint response from Council, which the Town Clerk will submit to the Welsh Government by the 15th February 2016), and
- (c) meanwhile, Members will individually study the consultation documents on the Welsh Government's website at:

Fersiwn Cymraeg:

<[http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/draft-local-government-\(wales\)-bill-consultation/?skip=1&lang=cy](http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/draft-local-government-(wales)-bill-consultation/?skip=1&lang=cy)>

English Version:

<[http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/draft-local-government-\(wales\)-bill-consultation/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/consultations/localgovernment/draft-local-government-(wales)-bill-consultation/?lang=en)>

354. CARMARTHENSHIRE ANNUAL FORUM 2015

The Town Clerk's report had summarised the 2015 Carmarthenshire Annual Forum (attended by the Sheriff and Town Clerk). The event had focused on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which will:

- (a) promote the prosperity, resilience, health, equality, community cohesion, culture, language and global outlook of Wales,
- (b) establish Public Service Boards to prepare local well-being plans,
- (c) place a duty upon larger community and town councils, including Carmarthen, to:
 - fulfil the objectives of the well-being plans, and
 - publish annual reports detailing progress in meeting those objectives

The Town Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

355. THE SOUTH WALES LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS' FORUM

Members **NOTED** that the Town Clerk had attended a meeting of the South Wales Larger Local Councils' Forum, when Claire Germain from the Welsh Assembly Government had answered questions on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill (see minutes 353 and 354 above).

356. LAUNCH OF PUBLIC HEALTH OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

Members **NOTED** the Town Clerk's report that the Welsh Government is asking community and town councils to promote the Public Health Outcomes Framework consultation as widely as possible, to increase community engagement.

357. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES, TOGETHER WITH THE MAYOR'S REPORT

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Wyn Thomas, had represented Council at excellent concerts – in St Peter's Church for Tenovus, and in Myrddin Junior School for their Special Unit. Cllr Thomas had also supported the County Council's 'Christmas Cracker' promotional campaign for the market.

The Sheriff, Cllr Dorothy Bere, had represented Council at the 2015 Carmarthenshire Annual Forum (minute 354 above) and at the opening of the new ice-cream parlour in Gerddi Llydaw, Jackson's Lane.

Cllr Anthony Jenkins had continued to chair meetings of the Myrddin Junior School Governors, whose major concern is the impact of current and future budget cuts. The school has recently received an excellent Estyn report, with the Myrddin Special Unit singled out as a model of good practice throughout Wales.

Cllr Emlyn Schiavone had represented Council at Myrddin Junior School on three occasions, including their concert in aid of the Myrddin Special Unit, and at meetings of the Dr Mz Youth Project and Tŷ Ni/Tŷ Hapus Family Project. Both Dr Mz and Tŷ Ni/Tŷ Hapus are at pivotal stages. Management of the latter will be taken over by Plant Dewi in 2016. Cllr Schiavone also reported that Meals on Wheels and Nightlight need more volunteers.

The Mayor, Cllr Barry Williams, referred Members to his previously circulated list of engagements. Cllr Williams had also continued to represent Council at the Community Health Council. Pressure is being monitored at four local hospitals, and the Hywel Dda Health Board is allocating more clinics and nurses to cancer care.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.