

CARMARTHEN TOWN COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2014

The Mayor, Cllr Arwel Lloyd, presided over the monthly meeting of Carmarthen Town Council held in the Council Chamber, St Peter's Civic Hall, on Wednesday, 24th September 2014, at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Dorothy Bere, Non Edwards, Dr Dewi Evans, Philip Grice, Peter Hughes Griffiths, Anthony Jenkins, Arwel Lloyd, Kenneth Lloyd, Dr Ioan Matthews, Douglas Rose, Alan Speake, Wyn Thomas and Barry Williams

213. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Reverend Tom Defis, Dr Richard Edwards, Alun Lenny and Catrin Howells Lloyd.

214. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

215. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 30TH JULY 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on the 30th July 2014 be accepted as a true record, subject to the following correction: Minute 172 (page 72, third paragraph) add the following sentence: *'Cllr Anthony Jenkins emphasised that the Town Council should exercise due diligence before deciding whether to assume responsibility for the Bro Myrddin Indoor Bowling Centre'*.

216. MATTERS ARISING: MINUTE 163 - SWANSEA BAY CITY REGION

Members noted that Sir Terry Matthews (Welsh-Canadian owner of the Celtic Manor) had been appointed Chairman of the Swansea Bay City Region.

It was proposed by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Alan Speake, and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will invite Sir Terry Matthews and representatives of all Carmarthenshire community and town councils to a meeting at the Civic Hall on Wednesday, 19th November 2014, at 7.30 pm

217. QUESTIONS

No questions were reported.

218. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 9th September 2014 be signed and accepted as a true record.

219. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 180: Penllwyn Park - Request from Simon Thomas

Attached as Appendix 1 to the agenda was the previously circulated letter from Simon Thomas AC/AM asking for the Penllwyn Park fencing to be reviewed. The Town Clerk reported that, before the meeting of Council, Cllrs Alun Lenny and Alan Speake had met two members of the public (the third representative had been called to an emergency in his capacity as Fire and Rescue Officer) and notes of the meeting would be presented to the General Purposes Committee on the 14th October 2014, and discussed by Council on the 29th October 2014.

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

(b) Minute 185: Carmarthen County Museum - 200th Waterloo Anniversary

It was proposed by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, and **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) in principle the Town Council supports the County Museum's request for joint working on a project to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and
- (ii) the Town Clerk will bring back to the General Purposes Committee further details from the Museum Manager of the role he envisages for the Town Council in the project.

(c) Minute 187: County Council - Off Street Parking

Members condemned the County Council's introduction of Sunday car park charges, including for the disabled, and imminent introduction of evening charges. The Mayor expressed Council's disappointment that, at a time when the County Council should be helping local traders, the town centre has been engaged in one battle after another with the County Council on the subject of parking charges.

It was proposed by Cllr Dr Dewi Evans, seconded by Cllr Barry Williams, and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will (a) write to the County Council to express Members' disappointment at the additional parking charges being imposed upon Carmarthen and (b) will report the matter to the Town Regeneration Forum.

220. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH SEPTEMBER 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Finance Committee held on the 11th September 2014 be signed and accepted as a true record.

221. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 196: Financial Report

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **RESOLVED** that, following the previously approved transfer of £10,000 from Santander to the West Wales Credit Union, the Santander Reserve Account should be closed and the remaining funds transferred to a reserve account in the Nat West Bank.

(b) Minute 202: Applications for Funding

(i) Ferryside Lifeboat

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Alan Speake, and **RESOLVED** that Council contribute £200 (two hundred pounds) per annum, for three years, to the Ferryside Lifeboat, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(ii) Local Works

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Douglas Rose, and **RESOLVED** that Council not contribute to the Local Works campaign, as the proposal was not directly related to Carmarthen.

(iii) Shelter Cymru

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Council donate £200 (two hundred pounds) to Shelter Cymru, for their work in Carmarthen, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(iv) Hafan Cymru

It was proposed by Cllr Kenenth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Council donate £100 (one hundred pounds) to Hafan Cymru, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(v) Carmarthenshire Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

It was proposed by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Council donate £200 (two hundred pounds) to Ffederasiwn Clybiau Ffermwyr Ifanc Sir Gâr, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

222. PLANNING MATTERS: CURRENT APPLICATIONS

Attached as Appendix 3 to the agenda was a list of current applications. With the Chairman's consent, further applications were tabled.

It was proposed by Cllr Douglas Rose, seconded by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, and **RESOLVED** that Council's observations on current applications for planning consent are as indicated in Appendix 1 attached.

223. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

No highways matters were reported.

224. LICENSING MATTERS

No licensing matters were reported.

225. NORTH WARD

(a) Response of Dorothy Bere

The Town Clerk confirmed that Dorothy Bere had accepted the office of Member for the North Ward, and Members welcomed Cllr Bere to her first meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Dorothy Bere be appointed to the General Purposes Committee in place of Professor Diarmait Mac Giolla Christ.

(b) Co-option of New Member

Referring to the seat vacated by Professor Mouel Izzidien, the Town Clerk's report had confirmed that, following the necessary Public Notifications, no election had been requested. Council could therefore co-opt a Member to the seat, in accordance with the provisions of Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules, 1986. Members had been reminded that nominated individuals needed to be a Commonwealth citizen or Euro national, over eighteen years of age, an elector, who had resided for at least twelve months in the town (or within three miles of) or occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises therein, or had their principal or only place of work there.

The Chairman sought nominations. Mr Baba Mallam Gana was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, and seconded by Cllr Douglas Rose, as a UK resident, a Senior Consultant Surgeon at Glangwili Hospital, a leading citizen in the town and Chairman of the West Wales Islamic Cultural Association, who has lived in Carmarthen for twenty years, and has sent his children to local schools. No other candidates were nominated. Cllrs Peter Hughes Griffiths and Anthony Jenkins, on behalf of the Plaid Cymru and Independent Members, looked forward to welcoming Dr Baba Mallam Gana to Council and endorsed his nomination. It was **RESOLVED** that Dr Baba Mallam Gana be co-opted to serve as Member for the North Ward in place of Professor Mouel Izzidien.

226. TOWN CENTRE

(a) Letter from a King Street Trader

The Town Clerk's report had advised Members that a member of an arts co-operative in King Street had written to request support from Carmarthen Town Council and the County Council for King Street, more photographs of King Street on the Town Council's website, and a meeting with the Mayor. The Town Clerk had informed the individual of the Town Council's efforts on behalf of King Street and other town centre streets, and the writer had expressed satisfaction that Council had been so active in such matters. Cllrs Arwel Lloyd and Alun Lenny, the Town Clerk and Events Officer had since met the individual, and discussed opportunities for promoting King Street in the run up to Christmas, and longer term joint working with the County Council and other King Street traders to increase the profile of the street.

Members suggested that King Street would benefit from pedestrianisation or a 'shared space' pedestrian/vehicle system, and conversion of empty space above shops to residential use. Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths advised Members that the County Council's Town Regeneration Forum is already considering the pedestrian/vehicle issue, but that the County Council has no powers to compel private owners to convert their first and second floors to residential use, and that a County Council survey had found a high percentage of the King Street owners were London-based. The Town Clerk reported that several new shops had recently opened in King Street and Nott Square.

Members commended the latest liaison with King Street traders, and the reports of Members and the Town Clerk were **NOTED**.

(b) Welsh Government 'Support your High Street' Campaign

It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Council staff participate in the "Support your High Street" campaign.

227. GRŴP GWALIA CYF

It was proposed by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Barry Williams will represent Council at the Grŵp Gwalia Cyf housing co-operative meeting on the 14th October 2014.

228. TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON FORUM

Members **NOTED** that Cllr Douglas Rose will represent Council at the Town and Community Council Liaison Meeting to be held on the 30th September 2014.

229. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Members **NOTED** that a resident had sent a Freedom of Information enquiry regarding Penllwyn Park, and had received copies of all requested data at a meeting with the Town Clerk on the 31st July 2014.

230. ONE VOICE WALES - 2014 TRAINING PROGRAMME

Members **NOTED** the 2014 Un Llais Cymru - One Voice Wales training programme, previously emailed to Members.

231. CHANGE STEP

Members **NOTED** the 'Change Step - Newid Cam' campaign being launched by Welsh Armed Forces Veterans, to help those suffering the long term effects of war.

232. MINUTES OF THE CARMARTHEN RIVERSIDE ASSOCIATION MEETING HELD ON 28TH JULY 2014

Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Carmarthen Riverside Association meeting held on the 28th July 2014, attached as Appendix 5 to the agenda.

233. LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Members **NOTED** the letter of appreciation from the organiser of the WW1 Centenary Commemorative Service held at Carmarthen Park on the 3rd August 2014, and joined with Cllr Arwel Lloyd in commending the work of former Mayor, Richard Goodridge, in organising the event.

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

The Mayor, Cllr Arwel Lloyd, referred Members to his previously circulated list of engagements, and particularly recalled the events associated with the National Eisteddfod, the visit from Lesneven, the Battle of Britain commemorative service, and the raising of the Flag of Peace at Priordy Chapel. Cllr Lloyd had been glad to support the Three Towns exhibition organised by Carmarthen Sketch Club at the Library. Cllr Lloyd had

attended meetings of Tŷ Hapus and commended the achievements of this family project. The Mayor also thanked the Deputy Mayor and Sheriff for their assistance.

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Barry Williams, had represented the Mayor at events such as the opening of Boots' new optics and hearing shop in Red Street, and the meeting of the UK Goldwing Owners Club which drew motor cycle enthusiasts from all over Europe to Nantyci and raised £1,000 for Tŷ Cymorth.

The Sheriff, Cllr Wyn Thomas, had represented the Mayor at a meeting of the Community Education Centre. It is still hoped that Trinity College may be prepared to take over the Centre.

Cllr Philip Grice reported that Cllr Non Edwards and he had attended a meeting of the Dr M'z Youth Project. The Trustees had been shocked to learn that elsewhere (e.g. Swansea and Cardiff) local authorities are closing down youth services and expecting independent youth projects to pick up the pieces. Thus far, the Carmarthenshire youth service is safe. Cllr Grice had also attended meetings of the St Mary's RC School Governors, where a new headteacher is being sought. The town tours had been well supported, e.g. today Cllr Grice, Dr Quentin Macgarvie and Reverend Philip Johnes had shown 60 Model School pupils around town, and recently Cllrs Peter Hughes Griffiths and Alun Lenny had guided a similar number of pupils from Ysgol Penboyr. With the Chairman's consent, Cllr Grice announced that, with the help of Cllr Catrin Howells Lloyd and Cllr Non Edwards, he would re-launch the Welsh Language Award, and it was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Grice, Catrin Howells Lloyd and Non Edwards would meet to discuss Council's Welsh Language Award.

Cllr Douglas Rose had attended several meetings of Tŷ Hapus Trustees; funding is precarious - staff and volunteers continue to seek grants; Cllr Rose has been appointed chairman. Cllr Rose had also attended the Battle of Britain commemoration, and was disappointed that more Members were not present.

Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths reported that the visit of the Lesneven delegation had been successful, as had the meeting with 55 students from University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Cllr Hughes Griffiths had attended a County Council European grants meeting. County Council site meetings had taken place regarding planning applications to which the Town Council had objected. As information, Cllr Hughes Griffiths advised Members that the observations made by the Town Council are included within information given to County Councillors.

Cllr Non Edwards had attended Dr M'z, met new staff, and gathered that the project is offering young people even more services. All Members will be invited to the Dr M'z prize-giving evening in October. Dr M'z has advised Council that two representatives would be more usual than four. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Douglas Rose, seconded by Cllr Arwel

Lloyd, and **RESOLVED** that Council's two representatives on Dr M'z will henceforth be Cllrs Philip Grice and Non Edwards.

234. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, and **RESOLVED**, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

235. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 15TH SEPTEMBER 2014

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on the 15th September 2014 be re-circulated with the additional points made by the Mayor.

236. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 209: Members' Discussions

It was proposed by Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews, seconded by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, and **RESOLVED** (by eleven votes in favour, one vote against and one abstention) that Council business should be conducted in the Council chamber, and not by email.

(b) Minute 210: Procedural Issues arising from Penllwyn Park

Members **NOTED** Cllr Alun Lenny's report that the Penllwyn Park Liaison Group had met before Council on the 24th September 2014, and would be reported to the General Purposes Committee and Council in October.

(c) Minute 211: Staff and Management Review

With the Chairman's consent, Cllr Philip Grice tabled the following additional minute:

'Cllrs Defis and Grice presented the Draft Review to the Management Committee and recommended that Management Committee members take away and read through the Review with a view to drawing up a final version, to be decided at a future meeting, which would be put to full Council in due course. This was agreed. It was suggested that Cllr Hughes Griffiths, who had been involved in the Review, should also be invited to join the Management Committee and the Chair agreed to pursue this possibility.'

It was proposed by Cllr Douglas Rose, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **RESOLVED** that the above minute and course of action be adopted.

(d) Minute 212: Staffing Matters

Members **NOTED** Cllr Douglas Rose's report that the necessary letter had been sent.

237. BRO MYRDDIN INDOOR BOWLING CENTRE

The Town Clerk's report invited Members to consider the likely high cost and time of the feasibility studies previously requested by Council, and reminded Members that Council's staff, including the Financial Advisor, had already presented the financial implications of the Bro Myrddin Indoor Bowling Centre being managed by the Town Council. The Town Clerk's report recommended that, if Council is minded to take over the Bowling Centre, they should do so on a trial basis.

Following on from the July meeting of Council, during the summer recess further meetings had taken place between Members and County Council representatives and, most recently (on the 17th September 2014) Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths had convened a meeting with the County Council's Director of Regeneration and Leisure and Head of Leisure, the Town Clerk and Council's Financial Advisor. Prior to the 17th September staff had again reviewed the Bowling Centre's operating costs, and estimated a first year operating cost in the region of £76,000. Staff had then estimated how operation of the Centre could be accommodated within the Town Council's draft 2015/6 budget. With the Chairman's consent, the Town Clerk tabled a draft three year rolling programme for Council's Projects and Improvements, which showed how the forecast Bowling Centre deficit could be accommodated within the Town Council's budget.

The Town Clerk's report advised Council that, at the 17th September meeting, County Council staff had stated that:

- the Centre is offered on a lease arrangement (copy lease to follow), with no transfer of the freehold,
- the County Council is offering a subsidy, phased over three years, of £30,000 in year 1, £20,00 in year 2 and £15,000 in year 3,
- from the County Council's point of view, the preferred date of transfer would be the 1st April 2015, or sooner, and
- the above is the County Council's final offer.

The Town Clerk's report also recommended that, if Members are minded to support the principle of taking over the Centre, they might still wish to press the County Council for a higher level of subsidy (£40,000, £30,000 and £20,000), plus transfer of the unencumbered freehold ownership of the premises.

Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths emphasised that the County Council is anxious to receive the Town Council's response following this evening's resolution.

Referring to the tabled schedule, the Town Clerk pointed out that the estimated first year operating costs of £76,000 would be offset by the County Council's year 1 subsidy of £30,000, leaving £46,000 to be found from elsewhere in the Town Council's draft budget for 2015/16.

In response to Cllr Dr Dewi Evans, the Chairman reminded Members that Council had previously received financial accounts and forecasts for the Centre, based on such details as the County Council had made available.

Several Members joined with Cllr Dr Dewi Evans in the view that, notwithstanding the cost of such an exercise, the Town Council should obtain external professional advice on the centre's fabric and finances, future options, and a five year business plan. Several Members also agreed with Cllr Douglas Rose that the Centre and car park should be transferred to the Town Council on a freehold basis.

Cllr Philip Grice accepted that Town Council staff had acted in good faith, but suggested that the accounts and estimates presented previously and tonight by staff were a fantasy. Cllr Grice stated that he had drafted a business plan which showed that the Centre could be operated for not more than £30,000 per annum, i.e. for considerably less than Town Council staff had forecast. Cllr Grice recommended that Council postpone a decision on the proposed transfer, enter into further discussions with Centre staff and Bowling Club representatives and draw up a new business plan. Cllr Alan Speake called for a survey of the Centre premises and feasibility study. Cllr Wyn Thomas reminded Council that the promised site visit had not taken place, and also called for information regarding the Bowling Club's membership (i.e. how many are town based?). Cllr Anthony Jenkins, whilst supporting the Town Clerk, called for the Town Council to obtain a building survey, legal advice and an independent auditor's report before making a decision on the Centre. The Chairman suggested that the County Council should pay for such reports.

Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths reminded Members that, over a protracted period, Members and staff had met representatives of the County Council and the Bowling Club, and had extracted all the information that is available regarding the Centre's operation. Cllr Hughes Griffiths considered that the Town Council already had enough information on which to base a decision as to whether or not the County Council's offer should be accepted.

Cllr Douglas Rose asserted that although many of Council's questions had been answered, some had not; he urged deferral of a decision and adoption of a timetable. Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews could see that much work had been undertaken on the proposal, but some questions remained.

It was proposed by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Alan Speake, and **RESOLVED** that Council will:

- (a) ascertain the cost of asking Messrs LHP Accountants to:

- (i) prepare a financial report on the Bowling Centre's past, current and future operation, and a business plan setting out the Centre's future potential and any risks to Council, and
 - (ii) attend a meeting of Council to present their report and answer Members' questions,
- (b) ascertain the cost of asking an independent firm of consultants (not a sole operator, for insurance reasons) to prepare a report on the Bowling Centre's premises,
 - (c) (there being no budget for this work) identify an additional budget to progress the above reports, and
 - (d) following the above reports, ask the County Council for an increased subsidy and freehold ownership of the Bowling Centre (or a 99 year lease).

It was further proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Wyn Thomas, and **FURTHER RESOLVED** that Cllr Philip Grice will arrange a meeting at the Bowling Centre between Town Council Members and Bowling Club Members, and Cllr Grice will also ask the Bowling Club Chairman beforehand if Council could have an indication of the Club's membership.

The meeting closed at 9.32 pm.

Appendix 1

Observations on Planning Applications

App. No./Location	Description of Work & Application Type	Members' Response
W/30739, 4 Bro'r Holl Saint	Extension, full planning (amended plans)	No objections
W/30826, Plot adjacent to Green Hill	Removal of conditions 1 and 2 on W/30488	No objections
W/30867, 32 Priory Street	Extension, full planning	No objections
W/30881, Outside no 9 Dark Gate	1 x green telecommunications cabinet on a concrete plinth, prior notification	No objections