**CARMARTHEN TOWN COUNCIL**

**MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD ON 27TH JANUARY 2016**

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Wyn Thomas, presided over the monthly meeting of Carmarthen Town Council held in the Council Chamber, St Peter's Civic Hall, on Wednesday, 27th January 2016, at 7.30 pm, in the unavoidable absence of the Mayor, Cllr Barry Williams.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Dorothy Bere, Philip Grice, Peter Hughes Griffiths,

Anthony Jenkins, Angharad Jones Leefe, Alun Lenny,

Arwel Lloyd, Kenneth Lloyd, Dr Ioan Matthews,

Emlyn Schiavone, Douglas Rose, Alan Speake and

Wyn Thomas

382. OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Wyn Thomas, reported the Mayor’s thanks for Council’s good wishes, and reminded Members that they are welcome to attend the Town Sports Awards on Friday evening.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Reverend Tom Defis, Dr Richard Edwards, Dr Dewi Evans, Dr Baba Gana and Barry Williams.

383. 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, Douglas Rose and Emlyn Schiavone declared an interest in agenda item 9(b), Dr Mz Youth Project – Financial Support, as Council’s representatives on the Dr Mz Board.

Cllrs Philip Grice and Alan Speake declared an interest in agenda item 10(a), planning application W/33191 (St Mary’s Church) as Governors of St Mary’s School. Cllr Alan Speake also declared an interest in planning application W/33255 (4 Allt Ioan) as a neighbour of the applicant.

384. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2015

 It was proposed by Cllr Philip Grice, seconded by Cllr Alun Lenny, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council held on the 16th December 2015 be accepted as a true record.

385. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 346(a)(ii): Comparative Crime Figures

Members **NOTED** the Town Clerk’s report that comparative crime figures have been compiled but are not yet published by Dyfed Powys Police.

(b) Minute 348(a)(iv): Town Councillors who represent Council on Outside Bodies – Personal and Prejudicial Interests

The Town Clerk referred Members to minute 379 (Finance Committee, 14th January 2016), which detailed the advice received from the County Council’s Deputy Monitoring Officer and from Un Llais Cymru/One Voice Wales. The advice was also tabled. In summary, if the Town Council receives an application for funding from an outside body, a Member who represents the Town Council on that body must declare an interest in the matter but is permitted to participate in, and vote on, the matter.

The report of the Town Clerk was **NOTED**.

386. QUESTIONS

 No questions were reported.

387. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2016

It was proposed by Cllr Alun Lenny, seconded by Cllr Alan Speake, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 12th January 2016 be signed and accepted as a true record.

388. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 362(c): The Grove – Prohibition of Waiting at any Time

 Members **NOTED** the reports of Cllr Alan Speake and the Town Clerk that the Grove proposal is under review by the County Council’s traffic team.

(b) Minute 364: Velodrome Project

 This was discussed under minute 394(a) below.

(c) Minute 365: Use of Carmarthen Park – Draft Policy

A draft policy for use of Carmarthen Park had been discussed by the General Purposes Committee, amended, and re-circulated as Appendix 1 to the Council agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr Arwel Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, and **RESOLVED** that Council adopt the circulated policy for use of Carmarthen Park.

(d) Minute 366: Sheriffs’ AGM, Carmarthen 2017

The Sheriff, Cllr Dorothy Bere, reported that former Carmarthen Sheriffs will meet on the 9th February 2016 to discuss arrangements for the 2017 Sheriffs’ AGM, and it was **RESOLVED** that appointment of a sub-group be deferred until after the Sheriffs’ meeting.

(e) Minute 369: Shrubbery in Carmarthen Park

It was proposed by Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews, seconded by Cllr Emlyn Schiavone, and **RESOLVED** that:

(i) Council accept the Dr Mz Youth Project offer to help maintain the shrubbery in the south-west corner of Carmarthen Park, and

(ii) Members will strive to think of other areas in Carmarthen town:

* where the Dr Mz team could make a difference, and
* where trees could be planted.

389. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 JANUARY 2016

It was proposed by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews, and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Finance Committee held on the 14th January 2016 be signed and accepted as a true record.

390. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 378: Velodrome Project

This was discussed under minute 394(b) below.

(b) Minute 379: Dr Mz Youth Project – Financial Support

It was proposed by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, and **RESOLVED** that Council donate a further sum of £1,000 (one thousand pounds) to the Dr Mz Youth Project before the end of January 2016.

(c) Minute 380: Draft 2016/17 Town Council Budget

The draft 2016/17 Town Council Budget which had been presented to Members in November and December 2015, and at the Budget Meeting on the 14th January 2016, was re-circulated as Appendix 2 to the Council agenda.

Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews reported that, had the Chairman of the Finance Committee been able to attend, Cllr Reverend Tom Defis would have thanked staff for their work on the draft budget, and would have urged Council to adopt the Finance Committee’s recommended standstill budget for 2016/17, particularly in the current economic climate. Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews proposed, and Cllr Anthony Jenkins seconded, adoption of the draft 2016/17 budget circulated as Appendix 2.

Cllr Philip Grice commended staff on the budget preparations, and moved an amended proposal that Members adopt a precept increase of around £11,000 to £12,000 – representing an average council tax increase of 25 pence per month for ten months – to enable Council to achieve even more for the community.

Cllr Douglas Rose proposed, and Cllr Kenneth Lloyd seconded, adoption of a 2% precept increase spread over two years, to enable Council to do more to help the less advantaged.

In view of the fact that Cllr Grice had already voiced an amendment, Cllr Rose withdrew his proposal in order to second Cllr Grice’s proposed precept increase of £11,000 to £12,000. Cllr Grice’s motion was defeated by three votes in favour and ten against.

Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews then re-iterated his original proposal, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and it was **RESOLVED** (by ten votes in favour and three votes against) that:

(i) the draft budget, as presented to the meeting at Appendix 2, be adopted by Council for the financial year 2016/17,

(ii) the following community contributions, functions, events, improvements and projects be incorporated in the 2016/17 budget:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Locations / Details**  | **Estimated** | **Yr 1** |
|  | **Total Cost****£** | **Costs****£** |
| **Community Contribution (Annual)** |  |  |
| S137 Payments - Small Grants  | 2,600 | 2,600 |
| S142 Payments – Citizens’ Advice Bureau  | 500 | 500 |
| Oriel Myrddin  | 4,500 | 4,500 |
| Donations: Urdd Eisteddfod | 200 | 200 |
| Llangollen International Eisteddfod  | 200 | 200 |
|  Gŵyl Cerdd Dant | 200 | 200 |
|  Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru (Blynyddol/Annual) | 200 | 200 |
|  Carmarthen Youth Opera  | 200 | 200 |
| Dr Mz Youth Organisation  | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Dr Mz - Additional for 2016-2017 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Welsh Language Awards | 200 | 200 |
| Siân Johnston Environmental Awards | 200 | 200 |
|   | **11,000** | **11,000** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Town Centre Activities (Annual)**  |   |  |
| CTC - Annual Sports Awards | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Storïau Caerfyrddin | 500 | 500 |
| St David's Day  | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Mayor's Fun Run | 0 | 0 |
| Pride of Place | 200 | 200 |
| Fairtrade  | 200 | 200 |
| Admiral of the Port | 200 | 200 |
| River Festival  | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Christmas Lights Switch On | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Christmas Lights Installation (equipment) | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| Replacement Christmas Street Decorations  | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| Christmas Festival - Reindeer Day  | 4,000 | 4,000 |
|   | **34,600** | **34,600** |
| **Civic Hall** |   |   |
| Hall Seating - Replacement (Folding & Fixed in Balcony)  | 20,000 | 0 |
| Stage Electrics - Control Panels & Lighting | 15,000 | 5,000 |
| Hall Stage Floor Refurbishment | 8,000 | 3,000 |
| Hall Stage - New Curtains | 10,000 | 0 |
| External Painting incl. Sign  | 1,500 | 0 |
| Replace Main Entrance Front Doors (Automtic Doors x 4) | 12,000 | 0 |
| Extension of Lift to Hall Level | 40,000 | 20,000 |
|  | **106,500** | **28,000** |
|  |  |  |
| **Cemetery** |   |   |
| Resurfacing Roadways | 40,000 | 15,000 |
|  | **40,000** | **15,000** |
|  |   |   |
| **Carmarthen Park** |   |  |
| Old Grandstand Roof Painting (Internal)  | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Bandstand - Phase 1 Refurbishment (conservation project/grant)  | 90,000 | 0 |
| Park Gates & Railings - Painting  | 10,000 | 0 |
| Velodrome - Safety Fence - Match Funding contribution  | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Play areas - Replacement Equipment | 18,000 | 6,000 |
|  | **133,000** | **21,000** |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Parks**  |   |   |
| Penllwyn Park - Play Equipment  | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Play areas - Replacement Equipment | 15,000 | 0 |
|  | **19,000** | **4,000** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Transport / Equipment** |  |  |
| Replacement Kubota RTV Vehicle | 15,000 | 15,000 |
|   | **15,000** | **15,000** |
|  |  |   |
| **Grand Totals** | **313,500** | **83,000** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **2016/17****£** |
| **Net Revenue Expenditure** | **533,400** |
| **Community Contributions** | **11,000** |
| **Town Centre Activities** | **34,600** |
| **Capital/Projects** | **83,000** |
|  | **662,000** |
| **Transfer from Reserves** | **0** |
| **2016/17 Standstill Budget to be:** | **£662,000** |

(iii) the Town Clerk will notify Carmarthenshire County Council that the Town Council’s precept for 2016/17 will be £662,000, which represents a Council Tax figure of £126.50 on a Band D property.

391. PLANNING MATTERS – CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Attached as Appendix 4 to the agenda was a list of current applications. With the Chairman’s consent, further applications were tabled.

(a) It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will write to the Planning Officer with regard to planning application W/33192 (St David’s Church, internal alterations to form dwelling, listed building) to indicate that Council:

* welcomes the proposed conversion of St David’s Church to form a dwelling
* is concerned that public access to the graves from both St David’s Avenue and Picton Terrace, in both the old graveyard and the modern graveyard, should remain open, and
* asks who is responsible for maintenance of the old graveyard and the masonry wall which surrounds the site.

(b) The following applications were **NOTED**:

W/33191, St Mary’s Church, Union Street, form footpath and doorway to rear of building for disabled access, full planning.

W/33189, 22 Bridge Street, change of use to café and shop, full planning.

W/33245, Nat West Bank, 59 King Street, minor demolition works for the installation of a new ATM, listed building.

W/33255, 4 Allt Ioan, Johnstown, conversion of loft and garage into bedrooms, full planning.

W/33256, 10 The Parade, replacement of existing front elevation windows, door and guttering, patch repair of render, relocation of internal partition wall, and removal/refitting of existing floor, listed building.

W/33257, Carmarthen Accident Repair Centre, Johnstown, new two-door access to existing building, and replacement of existing corrugated metal sheets with horizontal insulated panels, full planning.

392. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

With the Chairman’s consent, Cllr Anthony Jenkins reported the concern of many residents that a shortage of parking at Glangwili Hospital is prompting some to park on the main road, with consequent risk. Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths reported that the matter is being discussed by the County Council at a senior level.

It was proposed by Cllr Wyn Thomas, seconded by Cllr Philip Grice, and **RESOLVED** that the question of car parking at Glangwili Hospital be remitted to the General Purposes Committee.

393. LICENSING MATTERS

No licensing matters were reported.

394. VELODROME

(a) Appointment of Town Councillor as Member of Velodrome Project Team

It was proposed by Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Alun Lenny join the Velodrome Project Team.

(b) Appointment of Specialist to Lead the Design and Project Management Team

The Town Clerk referred Members to minute 378 of the Finance Committee minutes and that Committee’s discussion as to who should advise Council and the Velodrome Project Team on the design and project phase. The Town Clerk had reminded the Finance Committee of Council’s Financial Regulations regarding appointment of contractors and procurement of specialist services. The construction work will be put out to competitive tender in accordance with those Financial Regulations.

With regard to the appointment of a specialist, the Finance Committee had also noted that, in exceptional circumstances, the Financial Regulations permit Council to consider allowing a price to be negotiated without competition.

It was proposed by Cllr Kenneth Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, and **RESOLVED** that Council waives the tender process in the appointment of a specialist to lead the velodrome design and project management team, and engages the individual who currently acts as conservation surveyor to the velodrome project team, for the following exceptional reasons:

* the individual meets the criteria for undertaking this work in terms of knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience and expertise.
* he has worked with the project team from the start and has been in direct contact with relevant authorities (e.g. conservation planning department), suppliers (e.g. international suppliers of the unique materials considered for use as a surface of the cycle track) and other organisations (e.g. British Cycling) to provide the best possible advice and guidance to the project team.
* he has previously worked on projects for the Council at the Town Park and Cemetery and thereby possesses a significant bank of relevant knowledge.
* research with the RICS shows that there are very few approved conservation surveyors with these qualifications (specifically relating to conservation) across South Wales, none of whom are located in Carmarthenshire.
* the individual would be prepared to work on the basis of a 7% fee.
* the appointment of the said specialist would represent good value for money for Council and for the project.

395. 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 proposals for local government reform.

With the Chairman’s consent, the Town Clerk tabled slides explaining the draft Bill and its significance to Wales, to unitary authorities, and in particular to community and town councils such as Carmarthen.

Members noted that the Bill proposes:

* merger of unitary authorities (excluding Powys).
* increased access to local government, and public participation at every level.
* review of community council arrangements and legislation by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. It is likely that the 1972 Local Government Act will be replaced.
* the ‘power of competence’ will be a particular theme – at least two thirds of a council’s members will need to be elected, clerks will need to be professionally qualified, and councils will need to satisfy audit conditions.
* Committee Area Committees will be appointed by unitary authorities, with representatives from each community and town council.
* Community and Town Councillors will all undergo training.
* an initial six year term for councillors, followed by the resumption of five year terms. (The next election is due in 2017 – the following election would take place in 2023).
* revisiting whether council precepts should be capped.
* Well-being Plans for each area, related to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) which is already in place.
* Carmarthen and other community and town councils would need to prepare annual reports detailing how they have met the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. Although this requirement would not be enacted before 2017, some communities are already in preparation. The Town Clerk advised that Carmarthen would benefit from being pro-active in this matter.
* more robust performance management.

Members:

* noted that provisions of the draft Bill could be affected by the outcome of the May 2016 Welsh Government election.
* broadly welcomed the general direction of the draft Bill regarding public participation, accountability, professionalism, and robust procedures.
* were pleased to note that Carmarthen Town Council has anticipated, and already accords with, many of the draft Bill’s themes.

It was proposed by Cllr Alun Lenny, seconded by Cllr Philip Grice, and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will respond on behalf of Council to the Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill consultation (and there would be no need to circulate the response to Members in the first instance).

396. QUEEN’S 90TH BIRTHDAY BEACONS, 21 APRIL 2016

The Town Clerk’s report had advised Council that Un Llais Cymru/One Voice Wales, as one of the partner organisations, is asking community and town councils to consider participating in the chain of beacons proposed to mark the Queen’s ninety years, on the 21st April 2016. Some communities are lighting conventional bonfires, others are using gas-fired beacons. The Operations Officer confirmed that a gas-fired burner previously purchased by Council is in store at the cemetery.

It was proposed by Cllr Anthony Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Alun Lenny, and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Carmarthen will light a Beacon on Thursday, 21st April 2016, in recognition of Her Majesty the Queen’s remarkable feat of service as head of state.

397. PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Members **NOTED** the outcome of the Town Clerk’s enquiries, as reported under minute 385(b) above.

398. PENLLWYN PARK PLAY AREA – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

With the Chairman’s consent, the Town Clerk reported that each household within the catchment of Penllwyn Park had received a consultation regarding the play area, which has also been promoted via the Carmarthen Journal. Plans are also in hand for Members and staff to visit local schools. The Town Clerk also advised that the children could be involved in the design of the play equipment.

There was some discussion as to whether the school consultation should include all the town’s schools, or only those within a certain distance from Penllwyn Park, and which Members should visit.

However, it was proposed by Cllr Dr Ioan Matthews, and **RESOLVED** that, in view of the extensive mail box survey already undertaken and the need for the play equipment to be installed without further delay, school visits would not be needed.

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

Cllr Douglas Rose had attended (but not as Council’s representative) the AGM of the Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services, when it was reported that government cuts are affecting a wide range of services.

Cllr Emlyn Schiavone is continuing to participate in the Tŷ Ni/Tŷ Hapus efforts to re-establish themselves.

Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths reminded Members of the need to enter Wythnos Gŵyl Dewi – St David’s Week in their diaries. This new festival is building momentum and will feature a parade – on a par with Cardiff and Aberystwyth – on the 27th February. It was **RESOLVED** that all Members will strive to participate in the parade.

 The engagements of the Mayor, Cllr Barry Williams, had been circulated as Appendix 5 to the agenda.

**The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.**