

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20th April 2016 in the Council Chambers of the War Memorial Institute.

Present: Cllrs. P James, N. Price, J Davies, S. Jones, J Rowlands, P. Lambkin, A. Jones, A. Edwards, T. Van Rees, P. Tonks, L Pace-Avery.

In Attendance: L E Ball (Clerk and RFO)

Visiting Speakers: Mrs K Thomas and Mr S Macintosh from the Library Service.

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr S Amor sent his apologies. After much discussion it was resolved to invite him to the next meeting.

Cllr S Jones arrived at 6:50pm

Cllr A. Jones arrived at 6:55pm

Cllr Rowlands arrived at 7:05pm

Cllr Pace-Avery arrived at 7:05pm

Cllr Van Rees arrived at 7:10pm

2. Minutes of the March Meeting

Cllr James asked if there were any issues arising from the minutes or any further amendments

Cllr Tonks wished for PCSO Kelham and PC M Davies to be added to the list of those present. This was agreed. There were no further issues and the minutes were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr P. Tonks and seconded by Cllr J Davies.

3. Bank Update and minutes of the Special Bank Meeting 17/03/2016

Cllr James asked if there were any issues arising from the Bank Minutes. There were no issues arising and the Minutes of the Special Bank Meeting were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr P. Lambkin and seconded by Cllr S. Jones.

Cllr James updated members on the Bank Action group meeting held previous to the Council Meeting. He outlined progress with the Red Kite Credit Union which has opened for business at the station and is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00am to 1:00pm. The opening was well attended with good press coverage.

We also have the services of the Post Office Plus service in the Town .

The Clerk read e-mails from Mr A Davies and Mr H Nixon as a result of the Special meeting. Mr Nixon's e-mail clarified several points regarding the post office and clearance of cheques whilst Mr Davies's e-mail outlined the protocol regarding reporting faults with the ATM . This information will be put into the Grapevine to enable people to report faults when they occur.

Action Clerk to condense information re ATM and give to Cllr Jones for the Grapevine
The positioning /repositioning of the ATM was discussed but as yet there has been no planning permission come to the Council requesting such a move .

In summing up Cllr James felt that the loss of the Bank was still having an effect on the Community but the hard work of the council and the support of the Local AM Kirsty Williams had secured some banking facilities within the Town. However the Bank Group would continue to fight for improved services and felt that a letter should be written to Mr C Davies MP to request raising the issue of rural banking and the protocol involved in shutting branches on the floor of the House in London as Ms Williams had done in the Sennedd.

He informed members that the meetings of the Bank Action Group would now be on a quarterly basis the next meeting therefore would be in July before the recess.

Mrs K Thomas and Mr S Macintosh representing the Powys Library service arrived at 7:00pm. Cllr James welcomed them both to the meeting and invited them to explain the purpose of their visit.

Mrs Thomas outlined all the services currently available within the Llanwrtyd Wells Library (A copy of which is attached to these minutes –Appendix 1)

Cllr James and all Council members expressed their surprise at the vast array of the services provided but felt that they were not widely known and should be promoted more successfully within the Community. Cllr James asked the question –“where is Llanwrtyd Library in the closure stakes?” Mr Macintosh outlined the position of the library service as a whole and stated that in order to meet their “cut in funding target” they needed to make a 50% budget saving for Branch libraries.

The current running cost of Llanwrtyd Library was given as £14066 which included staffing costs for the qualified Librarian at 14.5 hours a week.

Possible scenarios were:

- that the Community contribute 50%--£7033
- that there would be community delivery using Powys County council grant on a 40%,35%,30% sliding scale over three years which in money terms would be £4908 in year 1, £4295 in year 2, and £3681, in year three .

Both Mrs Thomas and Mr Macintosh were open to any ideas as to how to make these savings and their presence was just one of other visits that could be made to seek solutions to the problem. The exercise that they are currently engaged in is one of opening up dialogue with Communities.

Cllr James thanked them for their input and opened the floor to members for questions/comments /observations. The following points were put forward;

- the model in Llanwrtyd was efficient and the question was asked would cuts be made across all libraries ?
- the running costs given were challenged with the feeling that they could be reduced.
- the community and certainly the Town Council could not afford to fund the 50% of the total running costs. There could be the possibility of contributions from other Local Councils whose residents use the library but this would have to be broached with them.
- What would happen to the children’s school library?

This would have to be negotiated with the school and discussions would have to be undertaken with the Head teacher).

- We, in Llanwrtyd , are currently successful and maintain standards because a professional librarian is in situ. Libraries staffed with volunteers would compromise these standards. There was strong support for keeping a paid post in the Library.

The Welsh Government are not supportive of volunteers and a paid post cannot be replaced by a volunteer to do the same job it- is contrary to Employment Law. Therefore on the one hand the library Service is expected to make cuts yet the Service itself is a statutory service.

- The question was asked what the statutory requirement is-what population should a library serve ? and the observation made that there will come a point where the provision will be challenged-statutory provision v cuts –there will be a tipping point.

Mr Mactintosh acknowledged that there was a social conscience attached to Libraries and that it was often a very emotive subject.

- It was felt that the library needs promoting with good signage, and news of activities and services available, well publicised such as the free “family history” site .

It was agreed that such promotion could be done through the Grapevine.

- If we raise funds within the community would the money stay in Llanwrtyd or go into a central pot to be shared out.

The Town Council was assured that any money raised would remain in Llanwrtyd. The question was then raised what would we raise money for ? The Service would have to remain with the Powys County Council as it is a statutory Service and therefore the Town Council would not have any stake or part ownership in the Library as such .

The feeling at Welsh government is that there should be a minimum of 10hours library service.

The following ideas were put forward:

- Reduce hours of the librarian and renegotiate the opening times.
- The total running costs could be reduced to £8000.00 and therefore the contribution would reduce to £4000.00 which could possibly be funded from other sources.
- Cefyfaes Trust could be approached.
- The librarian's hours needed to be preserved if possible though there was a possibility that the librarian could have hours maintained working in other libraries.
- The views of the Librarian would have been useful.

She was invited to the meeting but was unable to attend on this occasion.

- Had other avenues of cost cutting been explored e.g. cost of delivering single book requests to libraries, transport costs etc

All other avenues had been looked at –the mobile library service had been reduced to once a month, the book runner service had been removed and the library service as a whole continually monitor their running costs.

- The timescale for options and negotiations was sought and whether there were to be further meetings.

Mr Macintosh voiced that they were hoping to get conversations and consultations done by the end of June in order to go to Cabinet in July. That would be followed by implementation of decisions.

- It was felt that this was a tight schedule and that more meetings were required to take things forward.

Cllr Pace-Avery seized the opportunity to inform members of a writing competition to be held in memory of the late Cathy George and suggested that the library have an open day to highlight the services they provide . Mrs Thomas felt this to be a good idea and the date of the 31st May was tentatively mentioned.

Cllr James thanked both Mrs Thomas and Mr Macintosh for their honesty and their time and felt the discussion had been a worthwhile one. He reiterated the Town Council's commitment to keeping the Library in Llanwrtyd and would work with the Library Service to find a solution.

Mrs Thomas would get back to the Town Council with a date for a further meeting.

Mrs Thomas and Mr Macintosh left the meeting.

Action: Cllr Pace Avery to keep members informed of the date for the Open Day

Cllr Van Rees felt there was scope for negotiation and said he would exercise his right to attend future Cabinet meetings related to the Library Service. He felt that the Town Council should provide what the Community can afford.

Cllr James felt very strongly that once again unpaid councillors were being expected to take on the responsibility of paid members at Powys County Council and felt that a letter should be sent voicing the concerns of the Town Council.

Cllr Van Rees defended the local Authority and felt that any letter should be addressed to the Welsh Government who continue to provide Powys with the worst financial settlement in Wales. Members felt that a letter should be written to the Welsh Local Government Association and the Western Mail.

Action: Clerk and the Mayor to construct such a letter.

4. Finance

4.1 March Balance Sheet –the Clerk presented the end of Year March balance sheet to members. They were proposed as an accurate account by Cllr P James and seconded by Cllr P Tonks.

4.2 End of year budget update –the Clerk presented the end of year budget to members explaining each heading and also presented members with end of year figures for the Pavilion and the Public toilets. The end of year budget was proposed as an accurate record by Cllr L. Pace-Avery and seconded by Cllr T. Van Rees.

4.3 Bank Reconciliation- The Clerk presented the Bank reconciliation to members and explained its contents. This was proposed as an accurate record by Cllr T. Van Rees and seconded by Cllr P. Tonks.

The question was raised as to whether the Town Council should consider moving its reserves into the newly opened Red Kite Union.

It was suggested that the Clerk find out what sort of dividend is available with the Red Kite Union and report back to the table. It was established that the organisation is protected by the FSA.

4.4 Audit Review- The Clerk presented members with a document outlining the review of the internal auditor and the response received from Mr H. Evans.

It was resolved to maintain Mr H. Evans as the Council's internal auditor and accepted his revised fees of £60.00 per annum for his services. This was formally proposed by Cllr A. Jones and seconded by Cllr P. James.

Members were happy for the accounts to be sent for internal auditing.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

Cllr Tonks informed members that he had had contact with PCSO Kelham and had been informed that the culprits of the vandalism at Christmas would not be prosecuted.

Cllr Van Rees confirmed this and was disappointed with the outcome.

Cllr James informed members that we would keep a n account of monies spent on putting right acts of vandalism and would publish the results in the Grapevine as this would inform the community of the cost to the Town Council.

Action ; Clerk to keep record of money spent repairing acts of vandalism.

6. Traffic Calming

Cllr Tonks reported the information " Go Safe" indicating that the van had visited Llanwrtyd 5 times during January of this year. As the tourist season begins again we are experiencing problems with speeding again. He enquired whether any Councillors wished to volunteer for the CARS programme. Many Councillors were reluctant to commit at this point because of working commitments and the lack of information regarding how much was actually involved in the project. Cllr Tonks informed members that he did have six volunteers (the maximum which they would train at one time) but felt that there should be back up members to support should the need arise. Cllr Price suggested that he bring more information to the next meeting. Cllr James thanked Cllr Tonks for co-ordinating the project and gave total support from members for what he was doing, supporting the view that more information was needed regarding time commitment and what was actually involved.

Cllr Tonks informed members that the Darwin Project that he had been involved in with Sergeant Owen Dillon, had now become an all Wales strategy with the amalgamation of Go Safe and Road Policing.

7. Feedback from Councillors

Cllr James urged members to inform the Clerk if unable to attend meetings arranged. If Councillors did not inform of absence then others who turn out for meeting may be wasting their time as the meeting becomes inquorate. This is frustrating for all concerned.

Cllr Tonks updated members on the situation with the Gardening Club. The ballot undertaken to decide a way forward was inconclusive.

The club did not want to close but people were finding it difficult to commit to the various roles needed to sustain it. At the extraordinary meeting it was resolved that the club not be committee led rather Mr and Mrs Rowlands would be the hub with other people taking responsibility for various things as and when needed. John Seed is the treasurer. Cllr Tonks will no longer report back to Council regarding the club and will no longer coordinate with Mr. Garland regarding the Town Square and Green.

Cllr Pace Avery informed members that the bouncy castle was unavailable unless contact could be made with the owners son who may be able to provide it and man it.

Cllr S Jones reported that the re-cycling bins at Abergwesyn had now been removed. As yet there was no date set for the AGM but felt it would be sometime in May.

Cllr Van Rees updated members on the position with "Snack Attack" informing members that the enforcement notice was with the County Solicitors.

He informed members that the Town Council would not be liable for the rates at Bromsgrove Hall , that Powys had agreed to pay the rates.

With regard the Welsh Unit he informed members that they were not in a position to oppose closure. However the transportation of 4yr olds on the High School bus was not acceptable and it was felt that since there had been money allocated in the closure statement for transportation they were fighting for a mini-bus to be provided from Llanwrtyd to Builth Wells Welsh unit in the Primary School. This , however ,may cause children to lose the opportunity for after school activities as the bus would leave at a designated time

Concern was also expressed that parents would no longer choose Welsh medium education because their choices had been limited..

Cllr Rowlands informed members that the Heritage Centre was due to be officially opened on the 14th May at 12:00pm by Roger Williams. He invited all members to attend.

He also asked the Town Council for a letter of support to Mr H. Davies who is negotiating with Cardiff as to the fate of the Bethesda Chapel. He felt that a letter of support would be gratefully received.

There would be a "Sisterhood" coffee morning in May.

Cllr Davies asked if any further progress had been made with regard access to Glan Irfon Rad. Cllr James indicated that this issue had been addressed in the past and that until the town council had had a letter of complaint nothing could be done.

Cllr Van Rees declared an interest and left the meeting.

Cllr James asked the table if they wanted any action to be taken. It was felt that a letter be written to PC Kelham making her aware of the situation and potential for flare up as it constitutes blockage of a public highway.

Action : Clerk to make contact with PC Kelham

8. Planning

There were three planning applications brought to the table.

- a) Planning application P/0376/2016- Erection of a porch to front elevation at North Barn Glan Irfon Station Road.-there were no objections raised.
- b) Planning Application P/2016/0300-Change of use of land to form additional residential curtilage with dwelling at land adjoining new dwelling at land adjacent to Water Treatment Works, Llanwrtyd. No objections were raised.
- c) Planning application P/2016/0301-application to vary condition no2 to planning permission B/0006/0233 to allow design changes at plot at former Water Treatment Works, Victoria Road, Llanwrtyd Wells. No objections were raised.

9. Twinning

Cllr J Davies updated members on the forthcoming Twinning visit and outlined the difficulty in obtaining funding for the event . He brought to the attention of members the table top sale on Saturday May 7th, the forthcoming Memorial Service for Nicholas Winton on the 19th May in London and the fact that stamps were now available with Nicholas Winton featured on the Humanities set

Cllr James enquired if there would be an official meeting with representatives of the Town Council.

10. Pubic Toilets

Cllr Price outlined the discussion had at the Development Committee on Wednesday 13th April with regard the lease on the public toilets. He put forward to full Council the recommendation that the Town Council take on the Freehold of the toilets. The proposal was put to the vote and all members agreed to take on the freehold of the Public Toilets on Gan y Afon Road.

The Clerk updated members on the funding situation. The business plan had been passed to the Tourism Support Scheme and a further application for funding had been made. We await a response.

11. Dolwen Field

- 11.1 Pavilion Project- Cllr Price fed back to members issued discussed at the Development meeting on the 13th April. He outlined what had been done so far and informed members that the feedback received indicated that the priority was to put access

to the Pavilion . Many groups have expressed an interest in using the Pavilion if access was available. The project proposed of putting a running track, cycle track and fitness trail would include access to the site with parking facilities. Cllr James asked members if they were in favour of proceeding with the expression of interest form. All members agreed that this could be carried forward.

Action: Clerk to fill in application of interest form . Cllr Lambkin expressed concern that the Pavilion was not generating enough revenue to cover basic costs. Would this be a problem in the future?

Cllr James voiced that this was the reason to explore ways to develop the site further. Cllr Rowlands offered £500.00 towards the cost of a feasibility study should we need it. This was money given to the Heritage centre by Mrs Watkins and having been consulted had agreed that the money be given to the Dolwen Field project. Cllr James thanked Cllr Rowlands for the generous offer.

The Clerk informed members that the Hedge between the play park and the skate park had been cut and requested advice as to whether the hedge at the side of the play park should also be cut. Cllr Price recommended that the second hedge be cut.

Action: Clerk to contact Mr Croker with a view to cutting second hedge.

11.2 Play Park- The Clerk relayed information from Mr Dodds about the state of the train in the children's play area. The wood s beginning to rot and needs work doing on it. Cllr Price suggested that as a result of the pending ROSPA report that there would be some expenditure needed on the play area. He suggested waiting until the report was available to the Town Council before any remedial work was carried out.

11.3 Picnic in the Park

Cllr James outlined the plans for "Picnic in the Park" The event will be from 2:30pm -6:30pm with games , live music , bouncy castle if possible, bingo, etc. It was suggested that Play Radnor be contacted to see if they could provide some support on the day. The festival Committee were unable to give any support as many people were away. Cllr Van Rees and Cllr A Jones had priced mugs for the event with Children from the Primary School and Secondary School would receive a commemorative mug for the occasion of the Queen's birthday. Cllr Van Rees kindly offered to foot the bill for this and members thanked him for, once again, giving to the Community.

LWParc have kindly agreed to donate £200.00 for the event.

- Action: Clerk to contact school with a view to borrowing the kwic cricket set, the bingo machine and ask if the children's band would like to perform.
- Cllr Pace –Avery volunteered to search out a bouncy castle et al.
- Cllr James to pursue the live music
- Cllr Price to find someone to do football skills session on the day.

It was decided that there should be a fancy dress option with the theme of Royalty and a prize awarded for the best dressed on the day.

Cllr James provisionally booked Victoria Hall in case of bad weather.

12 Town Square and Green

Cllr Rowlands informed members that the Town would not be entered this year for the Wales in Bloom award as it was felt a lot of work need doing to before we met the standard required.

He enquired about signage and the Clerk explained the position with regarding the finger post needed for the Town Square. It would cost in the region of £800.00 and would need funding. Letters will be written to all bodies to ask if they would contribute to the cost of such a post .

Action : Clerk to write to Network Rail , St David's Church , Heritage Centre , Powys County Council re; above

13 Declarations of interest

There was 1 declaration of interest during the meeting.

14 Correspondence Agenda

Item 3 on Agenda

- e-mail from Mr Davies Barclays Bank re; issues raised from last Bank meeting

- Letter from Kirsty Williams with transcript of Record of Proceedings at the Senedd re Bank closures
- e-mail from Howard Nixon re; response to points raised at the last Bank meeting

Item 4.4 on Agenda –Return of letter from Mr Howells re; internal audit

Letter and Documents for the external audit from Grant Thornton(Notice of Appointment of electors rights to go up on 21st April)

Item 8 on Agenda

- Planning application P/2016/0300 –Change of use of agricultural land to form additional residential curtilage associated with dwelling at land adjoining new dwelling at land adjacent to Water treatment works Llanwrtyd Wells.
- Planning application/2016/0301 – to vary condition No2 of planning permission B/0006/0233 to allow design changes at Plot at former Water treatment works, Victoria Road , Llanwrtyd Wells.
- Planning Application P/2016/0376-erection of porch to front elevation at North Barn Glanirfon, Station Road.

Item 9 on Agenda e –mail poster from Twinning Association re: Table top sale on Saturday 7th May.

Item 10 on Agenda -

- letter from Powys County Council re; Rates for Public Toilets
- documents received from Powys County Council for Electrical testing, Legionella testing and Asbestos report (all dated 2009)

Item 14.0 On Agenda - Letter from Welsh Government re: local Authorities (Model code of Conduct(Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016-this outlines changes to the Code of Conduct and needs to be formally adopted by the Town Council

14.1 e-mail from Kay Thomas principal /librarian conforming attendance at the meeting.

14.2 Card of thanks from Sandra Davies for the Presentation of plaque and flowers for her retirement.

14.4 e-mail form Powys re: lease of Bromsgrove Hall

14.4 Letter from Cllr Van Rees re rates on Bromsgrove Hall

It was agreed that we invite the following people to the next meeting;

Steve Amor to update the Council on the position of the Co-responder vehicle.

Alan Lawrie and the Builth Practice to update on Sustainability and the surgery

Dave Brown Community Transport to update the Council on the venture at the Station.

Signed.....

Date.....

Date of Next Meeting: AGM MEETING WEDNESDAY 18th MAY

