

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21st December in the Council Chambers of the War Memorial Institute

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

In Attendance : Mrs L E Ball (Clerk and RFO)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr N. Price
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs P. Tonks and Cllr A Edwards declared an interest with regard the Planning Item at Agenda Item 10.
3. **Minutes of the November Meeting**
The minutes of the November meeting were duly considered by members. They were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr P. Tonks and seconded by Cllr J. Davies.
4. **Matters arising from Minutes**

Response from Mid Wales and West Fire Service re; Co-responder Vehicle

The Clerk read an e-mail received from the Mid Wales and West Fire Service which addressed the concerns of the Town Council. The e-mail was well received by members with the only outstanding issue being that of a letter to confirm that the vehicle would stay in Llanwrtyd. This is to be monitored. Cllr Van Rees requested copies of the e-mail in order to share the information with Llangammarch and Trefllys Community Councils.

Response from Adrian Davies Re; ATM machine

The Clerk read a series of e-mails from Mr Davies about the failing of the ATM machine. It was suggested that vandalism was the cause of the problem. He also indicated that a deposit ATM would not be viable in Llanwrtyd as it would require daily attention. Cllrs noted that the ATM machine was once again inoperable. It was requested that a further letter be written to Mr Davies pointing out that the service is not adequate and that many businesses have complained of losing revenue due to the inability to obtain monies. It was suggested that a notice be put next to the ATM machine indicating that the post office could dispense money if the ATM was not working. It was felt that Councillors should promote the post office and request that the ATM machine there be made an external one.

In the course of debate it was requested that a letter be written to Charlotte at the Garage congratulating her for being nominated for the Local Post Office /Shop awards.

Action: Clerk to do notice and put up and write letter to Charlotte.

Response from BT re phone box

The Clerk read the response letter from BT which pointed out that it was the unitary authority that would decide the fate of the pay phones. It was suggested that the letter, originally sent to BT should now be sent to Powys County Council

Action ; Clerk to send above letter to Powys.

Response from planning re Snack Attack

The Clerk read out the letter from Mr P. Griffiths (Strategic Director-Place) in which he outlined the Councils position with regard progress with the property Snack Attack. The case is currently being considered for formal legal proceedings. Cllr Van Rees requested a copy of the letter and informed members that he would continue to pursue the matter at County Level.

Cllr Rowlands informed members that he had written a draft press release about this issue and was waiting to consolidate further facts before submitting it for printing. He also felt that the timing of the release would not be good just before Christmas and suggested he bring the draft letter to Council meeting in January ready for a late January release. This was felt to be a good idea by all members.

Action : Clerk to send copy of letter to Cllr Van Rees.

5. Finance

5.1 **November Balance sheet-** Members duly considered The November balance sheet. The Clerk explained monies received and outgoings for the month. The balance sheet was proposed as an accurate record by Cllr T. Van Rees and seconded by Cllr L. Pace-Avery.

5.2 **Budget update** -The Clerk presented members with December budget update and explained receipts and payments to date. There remains one more precept payment to be made in December and approximately £4000.00 expenditure to be accounted for. At the end of the financial year there will be a small surplus. The

budget update was accepted by all members and proposed as an accurate record to date by Cllr T. Van Rees and seconded by Cllr A. Jones.

5.3 Proposed budget for 2017-2018- the Clerk presented a proposed budget to members for the year 2017-2018. With minor increases in expenditure under certain headings, to offset inflation it was apparent that there would be a deficit in the budget. With increased responsibility for the running of services together with planned expenditure for the May 2017 local elections it was debated whether there should be a rise in the precept. After much discussion and explanation it was formally proposed to raise the precept for 2017-2018 from £16500 to £17500. This was seconded by Cllr J. Rowlands. A vote ensued and the motion was unanimously carried.

5.4 Funding of Finger Post-Cllr James informed members that there had been a positive response to the request for sponsors for the finger post with Green events donating £400.00, Charcroft Electronics donating £300 and Mr Fulford prepared to donate. There remained one or two organisations still to respond. Cllr Van Rees kindly offered to donate £100.00 and the Arts and Heritage Trustees agreed to increase their offer of £100.00 to £250.00. The Town Council will also donate a sum.

Cllr A. Jones is able to find a local stonemason to do the slabs and Cllr Edwards was asked to investigate a stonemason in Hereford.

Cllr James made a formal proposal that the project should now go ahead and asked members for a show of hands. The proposal was unanimously carried.

Action; The Clerk to go ahead and order the post and the arms in consultation with Cllr James.

5.5 Revenue Grants- requests were made in writing from the Abergwesyn Hall Committee and the Victoria Hall Centenary Committee for the Revenue Grants of £250.00 and £400.00 respectively. Abergwesyn Hall Committee also requested the £300.00 grant towards the maintenance of the Hall and Toilets. This is an annual grant awarded over 10 years which is due to finish next year?

All members agreed that the grants should be paid.

Cllr S. Jones suggested that a letter be written to the committee requesting a meeting to discuss the ceasing of the £300.00 grant. It was also requested that some feedback was needed regarding the honesty box and whether it covered general repairs and running costs of the toilets in Abergwesyn.

Action: Letter to be written from the Town Council to the committee at Abergwesyn asking for a meeting.

6. Anti -Social Behaviour.

Cllr James informed members on the meeting with PCSO J Kelham with regard the vandalism. It was a very productive meeting with PCSO Kelham giving full support to the project on Dolwen field and offering to bring the bobby bus to any further events that may be organized.

It was also stated that there would be police monitoring of the Town in the future.

It was suggested that if the ATM machine was being vandalised that this might be an area for surveillance and Cllr Rowlands suggested that the Memorial Gardens were also an area for surveillance as there had recently been an incident of depositing food around the garden which had to be cleared up.

7. Traffic Calming

The Clerk read the response from Mr K. Skates with regard the installation of VA signs in the Town. The contents suggested further assessments needed to be made and other traffic calming measures to be employed before the consideration of such signs. Cllr Tonks felt this to be unacceptable to the Town Council and put it to members that earlier communication with the former transport minister Ms. E. Hart had indicated the possible installation of VA signs sometime during 2015-2016. All members agreed that this issue was being "put off" yet again and suggested that a letter be written to Kirsty Williams AM with a view to bringing the issue to the attention of the Welsh assembly, in an effort to move things forward.

Cllr Tonks offered to draft a letter to Ms Williams outlining the concerns of the Council and stating the case for the VA signs. The Chair agreed to this and asked for the draft to be forwarded to himself and the Clerk.

Action: Cllr Tonks to draft a letter to Kirsty Williams to present to the Welsh Government. Letter to be forwarded to Chair and Clerk to put letter onto official headed paper.

8. Feedback from Councillors

Cllr Pace-Avery put forward the innovative idea of having a volunteer bureau possibly manned from the surgery to encourage volunteers to come forward. The volunteering could be tailor made for the volunteer whilst serving the needs of the Community. Cllr Pace-Avery offered to man the bureau with support from those who could offer it.

Cllr Edwards felt that the Health board would welcome such an initiative.

Council members felt this was a very good idea.

She also informed members that there would be 5 Health and Well Being advisors for different areas of Powys. The Llanwrtyd area would possibly be included with Llandrindod Wells.

It was felt by members that yet again Llanwrtyd Wells was being left out. It was suggested that a letter be written to request confirmation of the area to which we belong and what services this would provide for Llanwrtyd and to express the Town Councils angst at being sidelined.

Action: Clerk to write above letter.

Cllr Van Rees informed members that the franchise for the Heart of Wales Line was due to be renegotiated. He proposed that a letter be sent to the Minister of transport and to the railway forum at Powys expressing the town councils opposition to the renewal of the franchise to Arriva Trains Wales unless an improved service can be operated to include Llanwrtyd Wells. The service, currently provided, disadvantages both residents and those who come to work in Llanwrtyd as the times of departure and arrival do not fit into any reasonable working pattern. In some cases employers are having to fund transport for their employees.

Action: Clerk to write letter to The Welsh Government regarding the above.

Cllr A. Jones requested, on behalf of a resident, that a letter be written to Powys Highways requesting that the pot holes along the road leading to the "Watkins" farm be repaired as a matter of urgency.

Action: Clerk to make contact with Powys regarding the above and send a copy to Cllr Van Rees.

Cllr P.Lambkin informed members that the Neuadd Arms was experiencing problems since the closure of the public toilets as people were queuing in the Neuadd to use their facilities. They were thinking of putting a porta loo on the square.

Cllr James reassured Cllr Lambkin that by the end of February the refurbishment would be completed and that it would be an unnecessary expense to install a porta loo.

The Clerk informed Cllr Lambkin that a request had been made to put traffic strips along Station Road but was told that they simply count the vehicles not their speed. It was suggested that another contact be made with Powys since strips have previously been placed at Ffos Road that did record traffic speed.

Cllr S. Jones informed members that there was a great deal of water lying on the Abergwesyn Road due to blocked gullies and requested that Powys be informed of the issue. This is particularly dangerous during very cold weather as the water freezes and the road becomes like a skating rink in places.

Action: Clerk to inform Powys highways of the problem.

9. Surgery Update -notes from the meeting with the Health board and representative Councillors was distributed to all councilors before the meeting. The town council are waiting on the suggested newsletter from the Health Board and Builth Practice and it was requested that Cllr Edwards follow up its progress with a view to sending a copy to Cllr A. Jones for inclusion in the "Grapevine".

The Clerk read a letter received from Mr and Mrs Stokes outlining their concerns for the surgery. This highlighted the need for information, discussed at the meeting in November, to be published as a matter of urgency. In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to respond to the letter and include a copy of the notes from the meeting.

Cllr James felt that the meeting with the Health Board, the Pharmacist and Builth Practice was a productive one and that efforts were being made to make the Centre more welcoming to users.. Many things were being put in place to address the issues raised.

It was felt that a letter of thanks should be sent to Mr A..Powell for the efforts being made.

Action: Clerk to write above letter and send a Card from the Town Council.

10. Planning -Cllrs P.Tonks and A. Edwards left the meeting

Cllr James outlined the issue of Planning Application number P/2014/1118 which references application for residential development at Maes Y Dre. This application came to the Council in 2014 and was robustly contended. Powys Planning Authority refused permission for the development. In March 2016 notice of appeal was given to the Town Council but no further communication was received by the Town Council as to the outcome of the appeal. The decision of Powys County Council Planning Authority was overturned by The Planning Inspectorate Wales in June 2016. This information came to the Town Council via a local resident who was very upset because the sale of his house had been withdrawn due to the search finding out this information. The Town Council feel aggrieved that no communication is required by Planning Inspectorate Wales informing them of such decisions when it will clearly have an impact on the buying and selling of properties in the surrounding area and that the Welsh Government themselves chose to sell what was designated as an area for employment to an individual for housing development. This decision is widely condemned locally and whilst the conduct of the Town Council has been exemplary in its transparency regarding this issue it would appear that appeal decisions are made without accountability.

It was suggested that a letter be written to Kirsty Williams AM and to the Chief Planning officer in Powys Mr G Davies stating these concerns and requesting their views on the issue.

Action: Clerk to write the above letters.

11. Twinning -Cllr Davies gave an update from the Twinning Committee informing members

- that the “Twinning Tree” won the Christmas Tree festival in St James Church with many items submitted from both Meriel and Cesky Krumlov..
- The Cesky Krumlov Twinning Association has asked for donations towards the monument to the parents of the children who were transported to England during the second World War. The Twinning Committee have pledged £100.00 and asked the Town Council to match that figure.

Cllr James felt that the Town Council should do this in memory of all those who came to Llanwrtyd and to show our support for such a worthy project. It was formally proposed by Cllr P Tonks that the donation of £100.00 be made by the Town Council and this was seconded by Cllr A. Jones and unanimously agreed by all members. The motion was thus carried.

Action : Clerk to raise a cheque for the above amount and send appropriately.

- That Mr Davies had begun to make enquiries about employment exchanges between Cesky Krumlov and Manor Adventure .
- That the Annual Twinning dinner would be held on Friday January 20th at the Drovers Restaurant.

Cllr Rowlands informed the meeting that the film crew from Cesky Krumlov, due to arrive in January had been postponed until April and that he would propose to the Heritage trustees that they also donate £100.00.

After some discussion it was felt that asking the Community for donations would be more appropriate in the New Year.

12. Library

The Clerk updated members on the communications received from Mrs K. Thomas regarding the use of volunteers and the need to have a meeting soon to work out the fine details of their roles. Members still felt they need assurance that the information regarding volunteers was apt. It was suggested that contact be made with One Voice Wales to clarify the position since it was felt that it was not a TUPE issue but an Employment Law Issue.

The question was raised as to whether there was a volunteer manual and if so could the town council have one for reference.

Action: Clerk to contact One Voice Wales to clarify the position ready to report back at the January meeting.

13. Public Toilets

Cllr James informed members that work on the refurbishment had started with the inside being gutted. The Clerk informed members that there was to be a new electric meter to be installed and enquired as to whether a Smart meter should also be installed. Cllr James felt that this was necessary. This work is to be done in early January.

Action : Clerk to liaise with Simon Powell for this work to be carried out.

14. Dolwen Field

Cllr Davies informed members that the field was infested with moles again. Cllr James asked the Clerk to contact Mid Wales Pest Control to get a quote for the work to be done.

Cllr Lambkin informed members that the Thursday club had enquired about progress and that Cllr James had reassured them that things were in hand and developing.

Grass cutting -it was felt that enquiries should be made with the view to reconcile all the grass cutting being done. The town council currently have the main contract with Powys Council and pay for further trimming to be done in the Play area , behind the Pavilion and at Nant y Rhos.. It was agreed that contractors be brought to the table in January with a view to obtaining quotes for the complete job.

It was suggested that contact be made with the grass cutter who cuts St David’s Churchyard.

Action: clerk to make enquiries and bring findings to the next meeting.

15. Town Square and Green.

Cllr James informed members that Mr Garland had been in touch to submit his plans for the Town Square. It was agreed that at this particular time the Town Council were involved with many projects and could not accommodate his wishes. Cllr James asked for a letter to be written to Mr Garland explaining the situation.

Action: Clerk to write the above letter.

Correspondence

- Item 4.1 on Agenda ---Response from the Mid Wales and West Fire Service re; Co-responder vehicle
- Item 4 .2 Letter from Mr K Skates re ATM machine and e-mails from Mr A Davies re; performance of machine and installation of a deposit machine.
- Item 4.3 Response from BT to letter sent regarding the pay phone
e-mail from Mrs S Bolter re ; pay phone
- Letter of response to be sent to Mrs S Bolter
- Item 4.4 Letter from Mr Paul Griffiths regarding “Snack Attack”
- Item 5.2 Letter from Welsh Government regarding section 137 expenditure

- Item 5.3 Letter from PCC regarding precept
- Item 5.4 Letter from Charcroft re; finger post
- Item 7 Letter from Mr R. Morgan Welsh transport Management division regarding VA signs
- Item 8 Letter from Powys regarding Local Development plan
- Item 9 Letter from Mr and Mrs Stokes regarding the surgery
Letter from Lasswade re ; Development Plan
- Item 10 Information regarding development at Maes y Dre
- Item 12 e-mail correspondence between the Library Service, the Clerk and Cllr Van Rees regarding the status of volunteer usage.
- Item 14 e-mail from Mr R Dobbins regarding the future of the Aggregate Levy fund
- Item 16

1) Letter from Mrs M Oliver regarding steps

Action : Clerk to write response to Mrs Oliver stating that Cllr Van Rees would deal with the matter.

2) Letter from One voice Wales regarding attendance at Garden Parties at Buckingham Place

Clerk to make contact with cllr Price to enquire if he would like to attend.

3) Letter from Powys regarding the review of its "Right of Way Improvement Plan"

This to be put on the public Notice Board

4) Letter from Powys regarding Day Time Activity and Day centres

5) Letter from Welsh Government regarding Christmas Lights.

6) Letter from Welsh Government regarding consultation on Welsh transport

To be posted on main notice board

7) Letter from Mark Drakeford regarding the publication of guidance on use of non-guaranteed hours

8) Information from Welsh Government regarding Partnership day 2017

9) Letter from the Red Cross requesting funding support

10) Letter from Mrs Thornton re fly tipping on the sugar Loaf

Letter to be sent explaining this was the responsibility of Carmarthenshire County Council

11) HOWLTA Newsletter and request for donation.

Letter to be sent to regarding Franchise to the Railway Forum at Powys , to Mr Edwards at HOWLTA and to the Transport Minister in the Welsh Government.

12) Letter from Powys regarding remuneration panel with proposed meeting dates.

It was noted by members that once again Mid Wales had not been represented when choosing venues and that a letter should be written to Powys pointing this out.

13) The Clerk highlighted to members that Arwain grant for The Tourism Year of the Legend.

Signed

Date.....

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 18th January