

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting Held on Wednesday 18th March 2015 in the Council Chambers of the War Memorial Institute

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm

Present: Cllrs: P. James , P. Lambkin, S. Jones, J. Rowlands

Observers: Student Tao Wan from China currently studying at Cardiff University (came to observe the workings of the Town Council)

2 other Observers were present at this time..

In attendance : L E Ball (Clerk and RFO)

Visiting Speaker: Neil Delafield (Red Kite Events)

Mr Delafield gave a presentation, showing a video of mountain biking in the area and outlined what would be involved in the forthcoming the Enduro Welsh Mountain Biking Championships which are to be held on the 24th/25th May. This event will bring many people into Llanwrtyd Wells and raise the profile of the Town .There will be media coverage and sponsors will be in the centre of Town on the Town Square throughout the weekend. Cllr James requested that no junction should be compromised during the event. Eventers will camp on the outskirts of the Town and therefore there should be no parking issues with in the Town itself. Mr Delafield requested the Town Council's approval of the event in order to promote Llanwrtyd as a place suitable and capable place to host such events. Council members present unanimously approved the hosting of this event. Cllr James thanked Mr Delafield for his input.

Mr Delafield left the meeting at 6.50pm.

Cllr James welcomed Tao Wan to Llanwrtyd Wells and to the meeting and offered him a place at the main table in order to observe proceedings of the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr P. Tonks and Cllr N. Price, Dr Hegedus of Builth Practice

2. Minutes of the February Minutes

The February minutes were discussed and proposed as an accurate record by Cllr P. Lambkin and seconded by Cllr J Rowlands.

Cllr A Jones arrived at 6.55pm.

3. Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Thursday 5th March.

The minutes of this meeting, held to discuss developments in the negotiations to keep Llanwrtyd Surgery open, were discussed. They were proposed as accurate by Cllr J. Rowlands and seconded by Cllr S. Jones.

Cllr R Thomas and Cllr T. Van Rees arrived at 7:00pm

Two further observers arrived at 7:00pm

4. Finance

The Clerk presented the balance sheet which was scrutinised by members. The balance sheet was proposed as accurate by Cllr T. Van Rees and seconded by Cllr A. Jones.

The Clerk informed members that, as a result of, information gleaned from a recent finance course attended , that the Town Council should consider increasing the amount kept in reserves. This was discussed and it was decided that at year end the Town Council would review the possibility of such an increase.

The Clerk informed members that a declaration of eligibility had been sent to Swansea Building Society. Cllr James addressed the issue of the second guest Speaker Dr Hegedus who had given his apologies and was not able to personally address the Town Council. The Builth Practice has issued a written

statement via e-mail regarding the status of negotiations in the fight to keep the Llanwrtyd Branch Surgery open. Cllr James informed members that the surgery would not close in August and instructed the Clerk to read the following statement to members;

“Further meeting held with Dr Walters, Jane Stephens (Practice Manager), Alan Lawrie and Andrew Powell on 13th March. Alan Lawrie is in regular contact with Kirsty Williams and advised that he would update her after the meeting. We have received a letter of confirmation following the meeting and further detailed discussions will now take place.

The practice felt the meeting went well, there were positive negotiations and actions to move things forward. The health board have agreed to taking direct responsibility for the lease with the landlord and part running costs to maintain the service. This would also give stability to Paul. As we were due to renew the lease in August, this responsibility has been taken out of our hands and therefore closure of the surgery in August will now not happen and we will continue to maintain medical services.

We have also been in negotiation with the Health Board regarding increased usage of the building in Llanwrtyd for nursing services and enhanced support by the district nurse team, thus confirming ongoing commitment to maintain the surgery and services to the patients of Llanwrtyd and surrounding areas.

The practice sustainability programme is in its very early stages and we will be making a bid for funding under this, details of the application process have not yet been finalised but it is expected to be by late June. We are aware that the decision will be made at Local Health Board level and given recent events and discussion regarding Llanwrtyd we are hopeful of a positive outcome but this will not be known until the Autumn. During this process we will be seeking the support of our AM’s to ensure that we meet the criteria and achieve a successful bid.”

During the ensuing discussion several points were raised :

- Cllr Van Rhys assured members that any closure of any surgery was not in the hands of the Doctors themselves but in the hands of the Local Health Board. He was of the opinion that the LTHB would not give such consent.
- He reiterated the robust response from the Minister Mark Drakeford to questions put by Mr W. Powell (AM) in the Senedd.
- Cllr Van Rees had put a motion before the Full Powys County Council meeting outlining the case to maintain the Surgery which had unanimous support. Further meetings with Mr A. Lawrie of Primary Health Care and the Chief Executive of Powys County Council proved to be constructive and fruitful.

When the question was asked “do we need to worry beyond August “ the response was that there are still ongoing negotiations taking place to secure the long term security of the Surgery but as they are still in process it would not be pertinent to discuss them at the meeting.

Cllr Thomas enquired if the Town Council had had a response from the Minister himself in response to our letters. The Clerk informed him that we had had acknowledgment of the communication but as yet no written response.

The Clerk read questions, sent by e-mail, from Cllr P Tonks who was unable to attend the meeting.

Cllr Van Rees outlined the history of the building itself and informed members that it was originally built, with many other surgeries at the time, under the “Private Financial Initiative”.

Cllr James proposed a way forward:

The information received from the Practice needed to go out to the Public as soon as possible in the form of posters, an article in the Grapevine and the Town Council Website .He asked members their thoughts on the necessity of having a public meeting. All members agreed that it would not be necessary at this point in time but should the need arise in the future then such a meeting would be called.

Cllr Thomas enquired as to whether the lease on the building was negotiable –this would remain to be seen as the Health board would now be dealing with the issue of the lease.

Cllr James gave the opportunity for Mr Davies ,(currently resident pharmacist in the surgery), who was observing, to comment as this would directly impact on his position within the surgery.

Mr. Davies responded that this was a positive outcome so far and the possibility of other negotiations taking place could, in fact, be beneficial to the Llanwrtyd Branch Surgery.

Cllr James concluded that there was a positive way forward and that Local Employment would be maintained. However, the Town Council would keep this item on the Agenda until the future security of the branch was confirmed.

Cllr Rowlands requested that the hard work of the Mayor Cllr James , the County Councillor, Cllr Van Rees and the Clerk in dealing with this issue, be formally recognised and minuted.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

Alcohol Licence for Delicatessen

The Clerk informed members that a member of the Community had attended the hearing with regard the alcohol licence for the Imperial Delicatessen .The outcome of the meeting was such that the licence was granted.

Cllr Van Rees informed members that there had been no objections from the main safety services and this was the reason for the licence being granted.

There is also no planning permission needed as the category of use has not changed.

Brianne Freeride Event

The Clerk read a letter received from Mr R Davies regarding the “ Brianne Freeride, due to take place in August, outlining his objections to the event The Clerk informed members that she had written to Mr Campbell via e-mail requesting that a letter of approval from Mr Davies be sought before the Town Council could sanction such an event. There has been no response from Mr Campbell.

Cllr James proposed a letter be written to Mr Ian Mills (at Powys county Council)informing him that after considering the points made by Mr Davies and the fact that there had been no communication from Mr Campbell that the Town Council are not prepared to sanction this event.

A copy of the this letter to be sent to Mr Mills and Mr Davies.

No further anti-social behaviour issues were brought to the table.

6. Traffic Control

The Clerk read a letter from Ms Edwina Hart regarding the installation of VA signs in the Town. The department acknowledges the A483 through Llanwrtyd as being problematic with regard to speeding and will consider installing Vehicle activated signs within the next two years.

It was suggested a letter be written to Kirsty Williams regarding the time –scale involved.

Action: Clerk to write letter to Kirsty Williams.

Cllr Rowlands presented members with data from the “GoSafe” Speed surveys. He outlined the information over the last two years which indicated that, although the cameras had been put on the Gateway signs, drivers were still exceeding the speed limit coming into Town from Llandovery and from Builth.

He felt this data gave concrete evidence of the need for the VA signs and could be used as such. Members thanked Cllr Rowlands for his input and agreed that it would be useful to continue to collate this information thus building up a clear picture of the situation over a period of time.

It was suggested that a letter be written to request information regarding the amount of revenue raised through speeding fines along this stretch of the A483 through Llanwrtyd .

7. Feedback from Councillors

The Clerk informed members that there had been two letters of application for the Councillor Vacancies and read both out. The Town Council will be informed by Powys County Council when the Co-option Notices can be placed.

Cllr Rowlands reported that the Bryan Watkins Memorial walk was to be held over the weekend of the 9th/10th May .The actual date to be confirmed when he had spoken to Margaret Watkins. He has approached Mr B Davies and J Davies who have agreed to organise the walk. It is to be decided at the next meeting which organisation the proceeds will go to.

No other issues were raised by Councillors.

8. Planning

Cllr Van Rees informed members that he was still monitoring proceedings with regard to “Snack Attack” and enforcement notices. He would report any updates at the next meeting.

No other planning issues were brought to the table.

9. Twinning

Cllr Rowlands reported that he, Cllr James and the Clerk had attend the recent Twinning AGM .Mrs H Davies stood down as Secretary with S Greenhough as a possible replacement. Mr J Davies stood down as minute Secretary and Mrs R Stickland was elected in his place.

Plans are going ahead for the visit to Cesky Krumlov and plans for the French exchange 2016 are beginning to emerge. The Gift for Cesky Krumlov is in the hands of Ms C. Bergman.

10. Public Toilets

Cllr James updated members on the situation regarding the transfer of this facility. The Deeds still remain an issue. The Clerk informed members that there needed to be a formal declaration of interest before the 31 March. Cllr James asked members for agreement in accepting taking over the toilets. There was unanimous agreement for this and therefore the Clerk was charged to write a letter to Mr A. Knox to inform him of this decision.

11. Dolwen Fields

Grass Cutting for 2015-2016

The Clerk informed members she had received quotes for the grass cutting of the play area, behind the pavilion, the skate park and the Town Square and Green by Mr A. Croker .His quotes had not increased in price this year and after much discussion it was unanimously decided that the Town Council offer Mr Croker the contract for these areas for the coming year.

The tendering document for grass cutting of Dolwen Field which Cllr Price had forwarded to all Councillors was discussed and it was felt that with a little "tweaking " it would be very suitable document to use .

The Clerk informed members that Powys was offering grass cutting again this year but as yet had not received a quote.

Cllr James suggested that the Clerk communicate with Cllr Price with a view to sending out tenders to get quotes in readiness for the next meeting.

The Clerk read a letter from "OTM", (a ground care business based in Hay on Wye) offering their services to cut the Grass. Cllr James suggested writing to this company thanking them for their interest keeping them available if/when tenders were to go out.

Cllr Lambkin requested an update from Cllr Rowlands regarding the condition of the trees along the avenue of Dolwen Field. Cllr Rowlands reported that he had investigated the trees but felt that it was too early to judge whether they were actually dead. He would monitor them over the next few weeks and report back at the next meeting. He also reported that the hedge along the side of the play area had not been cut and suggested that we ask Mr Croker for a quote to do the job.

Action : Clerk to contact Mr Croker regarding the hedge .

Cllr Rowlands to continue to monitor the trees.

Cllr Rowlands reported that, at the Pavilion meeting held in February, the issue of the "Fit Track " was discussed. In order to access any kind of funding it needs to be demonstrated that other groups use the field for sports activities. It was suggested that the following groups be contacted; the running club, the biking groups the Senior walking group with a view to gaining their support for the venture. Cllr A. Jones reminded members of the Queen Elizabeth 2nd Fields in Trust with whom the Town Council is registered.

12. Town Square and Green

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Mr Garland who has offered to redesign the Town Square in terms of planting. He has requested a plan of the site to include all services .Cllr Van Rees suggested that they may be in the Council Chambers. The Clerk will make efforts to find them and give to Mr Garland.

The Gardening Club is liaising with Mr Garland on this issue and the issue of land close to Victoria Hall where the grass is in need of cutting.

Cllr Rowlands enquired what was happening with the flag pole now that Cllr Hodges had tendered her resignation. Cllr Van Rees was still in favour of funding the flag but it was suggested that until a plan is seen of the intended planting by Mr Garland then the project could be put on hold a while longer.

13. Correspondence

Item 4 on Agenda --- Letter of declaration from Swansea building society regarding the Town Council's eligibility for their service.

Item 4 on Agenda ---- Letter from Blachere regarding increased charges on card use.

Item 5.00 on Agenda—Letter from Mr Roger Davies regarding the "Brianne Freeride" Event

Item 6 on Agenda---- Letter from Edwina Hart regarding installation of VA signs in the future.

Item 7 on Agenda - Letter of application to post of Councillor from Mrs Pace Avery

Item 7 on Agenda - Letter of application to post of Councillor from Mr Jim Davies

Item 11.00 - Letter from Powys County Council for Independent Annual Inspection of Play Area

Item 11 - Letter from Lizzie Metcalfe re; tendering for Grounds maintenance

Item11- Gmail form Nigel re; tendering for grass cutting

Item 11 –Quotes from Anthony Croker re; grass cutting

Item 13.1 G-mail response from Alan Lawrie in response to an open letter from Bernice Benton re; surgery.

Item 13.2 Copy of a letter from Farmers Union of Wales in support of Llanwrtyd Wells surgery

Item 13.3- Letter from Powys Library service informing us of slightly altered timings for the Library opening times.

Item 13.4 Letter outlining conference in May joint SLCC and One Voice Wales.

14. Miscellaneous

Cllr Rowlands informed the meeting that due to lack of leaders the Scouts in Llanwrtyd have closed .

This was met with disappointment by members.

Cllr Rowlands enquired as to whether a forthcoming Social event with Roger Williams would jeopardise a Councillors position. It was felt that it was an individual's choice to attend.

Cllr S Jones reported that Carwyn Jones , First Minister for Wales, had visited Llanwrtyd on Saturday evening .

Cllr Lambkin enquired if, as a Councillor, she was still able to accept the position of Polling Clerk. It was suggested that as long as she didn't declare affiliation to a particular Political Party there was no reason that she shouldn't..

Cllr James thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Tao Wan thanked the Council for an interesting session and was impressed by the professionalism of the meeting.

Signed.....

Date.....

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 15th April

