

**Minutes of the Town council meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in the Council Chambers of the War Memorial Institute.**

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

2 observers

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

1. **Apologies for Absence :** Cllr N. Price
2. **Declarations of interest** -there were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the September Meeting.**

A late amendment was requested by Cllr Rowlands at agenda item 14 "Town Square and Green" He requested that the line "He felt that the Town Square was not being maintained by the Club and that he and his wife were doing workshops to maintain this", be shortened to " "He felt that the town square was not being maintained by the Club.

This was duly agreed by members.

No further matters arose and the September minutes were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr J. Rowlands and seconded by Cllr L. Pace -Avery.

**4. Finance**

The Clerk presented the September balance sheet to Council. There had been income of £50.00 and expenditure of £574.72 with three unrepresented cheques to date totaling £74.04. The balance sheet was proposed as an accurate record by Cllr P. Tonks and seconded by Cllr.A. Edwards.

At this point the guest speaker Ms J Walsby arrived to talk about the Gardening Club and a way forward and proceedings were halted to allow her to speak.

Cllr James thanked Ms Walsby for her attendance and for her willingness to be the representative for the Gardening Club. and asked for an update on the planting within the Town. Ms Walsby informed members that all the boxes were now replaced and replanted at some considerable cost and requested that the annual grant of £300.00 from the Town Council be considered by members for release. She informed members that the boxes around the Town had been adopted by individuals. Cllr James remarked that the current boxes were bigger than previously and did this mean more planting and therefore more expense. He also asked if the current boxes would need treating in any way to avoid deterioration. Ms Walsby reassured the meeting that members of the gardening club were trying to grow plants ready for next year and although the initial planting had been costly it was hoped, next year, to keep costs down by using home grown plants. On the issue of treating, she informed members that the boxes were made from Douglas Fir and Larch and would change colour over time but would be expected to last ten years and therefore there was no need to treat the wood in any way. The issue of maintaining the Town Square was a more informal arrangement. Mr and Mrs Rowlands look after the Memorial Gardens whilst members take turns in maintaining the Kite area. Whilst the Gardening Club had gone through something of an hiatus she felt that with new members and non -members things were improving although she did state that it was difficult for people to find the time since many were working. Cllr James asked if help from the Primary School and/or the Secondary School had been sought. Ms Walsby felt that in the past the Primary School had been involved but this had fallen by the wayside but that this could be resurrected. Working with the Secondary School children was more difficult as issues of supervision and safeguarding of children were to be considered. She felt that working with the older children of the Primary school might engage those children and this could possibly continue into year 11 and 12 at high School. Cllr Lambkin felt that if this age child was involved they would have some ownership of the boxes and be less likely to damage them.

Cllr James brought up the issue of Wales in Bloom and asked if there were any plans to take this forward.

Ms Walsby felt that entering the Wales in Bloom competition was more than just planting and involved a variety of elements such as litter picking and weeding of pavements etc and was beyond the remit of the Gardening club alone.

Cllr James acknowledged the amount of work required to enter and suggested that perhaps businesses could be contacted to encourage them to add to their frontages to promote planting and making Llanwrtyd an attractive place. There could be a general appeal through the grapevine to ask the Community to do the same.

Cllr A Jones also suggested contacting Powys County Council to ask for their support which had been done in the past. She informed members that the Station area was planted by "The Friends of Llanwrtyd Station" group. It was felt that if the Town Council were to apply for Wales in Bloom then there should be a lead from the Town Council itself as well as the Gardening Club because it was too much for one group to tackle in isolation.

Cllr Rowlands said he would be prepared to put together the portfolio of evidence needed and felt that entering gave an incentive to people to make the Town look good and in doing would attract visitors who, in turn, would feel that Llanwrtyd was an attractive, well looked after place worth visiting again.

Other views were that things should be taken more slowly, a step at a time, for fear of overloading those already giving freely of their time and effort.

The Clerk suggested that she and Ms Walsby work together to produce a plan of action for next year. Although Ms Walsby agreed with this in principle she felt that all this information needed to be given to the Gardening club. She did feel that the onus was with the Town Council to lead any such endeavor, the point being made, that should there be any presentations the Mayor would be the receiver and as such it was felt that the Town Council should take the lead.

Cllr Van Rees informed members that he was due to have a meeting with Llangammarch Depot to discuss issues and asked the Clerk to remind him of any issues that needed to be brought to their attention.

The outcomes of the above discussions were

- Ms Walsby take suggestions back to the Gardening club
- That the Clerk and Ms Walsby put together an action plan for planting in 2017 if gardening club agree
- That businesses be contacted with a view to make their frontages more attractive
- That an article go into grapevine encouraging the Community to do the same
- That the grant of £300.00 for the Gardening club be considered at a later point in the meeting.
- That the Gardening club and the Town Council work together to enter Wales in Bloom with the Town Council taking the lead (should it be decided to go down that route)

Cllr James thanked Ms Walby and the Gardening club for all the work they had done and for giving of her time to attend the meeting. He looked forward to working with the Gardening Club to go forward with a planting strategy for the year 2017 and beyond. Ms Walsby left the meeting at 7:45pm.

**Cllr James resumed the main agenda going straight to item eight, Planning, since the issue was of relevance to the visitors.**

## **8. Planning**

The Clerk made reference to two letters written by the visitors and their daughter with regard to the planning application relating to the Development of Cym Irfon Barns. It was felt that a revised application had been made to the authorities and that parking was now to be requested for 30 cars and that the hall would be used as a Community Hall for weddings etc. The Clerk had accessed the planning site and read out the existing reports from Highways, Environmental Health, The County Archaeologists and Building Control. Cllr Edwards requested that since this was a revised application then the Town Council would have to be informed by Planning and should be allowed to restate its objections,

The question was raised as to whether the County Ecologist had been asked for a report.

Concerns remained with regard the water supply, the waste collection, the suitability of the road with the potential of increased traffic and the potential for increase in noise levels late at night if an alcohol licence were granted. The issue of the barns being of important Historical significance was also a concern. It was proposed that a letter be written to the Planning Department restating the Town Council's concerns and including the letters submitted by the affected residents whilst making them aware that some work has already be carried out prior to any application being made.

Action; Clerk to write letter to Planning regarding the above and to clarify if indeed this application had been revised since the application number is still the same.

Cllr James explained the process of the application going to a full planning committee which the Complainants should be invited to . He stressed to them the importance of attending this meeting as it gives them an opportunity to voice in person their concerns. He thanked the visitors for their attendance and gave them the opportunity to leave the meeting which they duly did.

**The normal order of Agenda was then resumed.**

#### **5. Anti-Social Behaviour**

Cllr James outlined the vandalism on Dolwen Field for those who were not present at the last meeting. He informed members of the action that had been taken and that two of the perpetrators had written a letter owning up to part of the damage. The incident was reported to the police and a plan of restorative justice was agreed. The perpetrators parents will pay for the paint to repaint the gazebo and PCSO J Kelham will oversee the work done. Money for the paint will be paid to the Clerk who will then issue a cheque to Ratcliffe and Son Ltd for £45.00. Members felt that this was a positive outcome and would send out a clear message that any act of vandalism would be followed up.

Cllr Van Rees informed members that damage was also being done elsewhere in the Town at Glan Irfon reporting that youngsters had smashed the rear window of his tractor. He had informed the Police but as there was no evidence he felt on this occasion there was nothing to be done.

Cllr Edwards pointed out that not all teenagers were destructive and it was important to keep a sense of perspective, not tarring all teenagers with the same brush. This was acknowledged by all.

#### **6. Traffic Calming**

Cllr Tonks informed members that there was little to report. He was waiting for PCSO J Kelham to get in touch with volunteers to get police checks organized and to initiate training but to date this had not happened.

He informed members of the latest GO SAFE statistics reporting an upward trend in the number of offences being recorded from April to September as can be seen from the table attached at appendix 1.

The question was asked if the Welsh Government could do anything to slow the traffic down and Cllr Tonks felt that VA signs would be invaluable. This led Cllr James to resurrect the issue of VA signs which a former Minister (Ms E. Hart) had promised some time ago. VA signs were to be considered for installation sometime during the year 2015-2016. It was suggested that contact be made with Mr Dean Williams who has responsibility for signage on the 483-Trunk Road and that although ministers could not communicate directly with elected members they would communicate with the Mayor. Cllr James said he would invite Mr Williams to Llanwrtyd .

Following further discussion, it was proposed that a letter be written to the new Minister in charge, Mr K. Skates, with copies of the original letters from Ms Hart requesting that the promised VA signs now be installed as a matter of urgency. Copies of this letter to Kirsty Williams AM and Chis Davies MP.

Action: Clerk to write the above letter and copy accordingly.

Cllr Lambkin made the observation that cars were also speeding along Station Road and that the speed limit signs had been obscured by overgrown hedges. She reported that someone had since cutback the hedge and the signs were now visible. Cllr James offered to bring this to the attention of the police at his next meeting with them.

#### **6. Feedback from Councillors**

- **Loftwen**

Cllr James informed members that he had met the new owners who had recently stayed in Llanwrtyd and had invited them to talk to the Town Council at some point. The information he has gleaned was that the development was very much a family concern and would comprise of a smallholding, with sympathetic planting of broad leaf trees. There was an interest in alternative technologies and it appeared that they were very open minded and sympathetic to the feelings of the Town. Cllr Van Rees also had the opportunity to meet family members and was reassured by the meeting. Mr and Mrs Fulford , the new owners of Loftwen , were very willing to attend any meeting felt necessary.

- **Snack Attack**

The Clerk reported that there had been no response to a letter written to Ms S Bufton at Planning regarding the Town Council's concerns about this property. Cllr Van Rees voiced that this was unacceptable and a letter be

redirected to Mrs A. York ,Portfolio holder for Planning, and that a copy of the letter be copied to Ms S. Bufton and Mr P. Griffiths her line manager.

Action: Clerk to write letter as above.

- **Surgery**

Cllr James thanked Cllr Pace-Avery for her efforts in setting up a face book page which had generated much comment.

The Clerk read responses from Mr Adrian Osborne and Mr A. Lawrie of the Powys teaching Health Board which addressed all the issues raised by the Community via social media and letters.

A long discussion ensued during which several points were raised and several points were clarified. They were as follows:

- The issue of consultations being overheard because of the rooms being changed around remains a concern. This issue had been raised many years ago when it was considered that sound proofing be installed.
- As a result of a conversation with Mr A Lawrie it was confirmed that the Powys Teaching Health Board had taken on the lease for ten years and as such the Builth Medical Practice were obliged to maintain services there.
- It was stated that the Town Council had no issue with the Powys Teaching Health Board who have been very positive and supportive in sustaining surgery provision in Llanwrtyd Wells . It would appear that the attitude of Builth Practice is at fault with an apparent message being conveyed that they do not wish a presence in Llanwrtyd and are concerned more about making and sustaining a profit above the needs of the patients they serve. It was strongly felt that appointments were being bargained with, with speedier consultations being offered if they attended at the Builth Surgery. It appears that people are being steered towards Builth the possible result being that the Practice use lack of attendance at Llanwrtyd as an opportunity to pull out.

The Town Council feel that since the Builth Practice initially appealed for Town Council support and have since secured the building for the future there is a reluctance, perceived by the public ( often as a result of comments made by Builth Practice staff), and dissatisfaction on their part about having to come to Llanwrtyd to do surgeries.

- The issue of a seven-day waiting time for repeat prescriptions is not acceptable and the question was raised as to why the Dr. in surgery at the time cannot sign prescriptions while they are there?
- The issue of specimens being put into an open container was raised. Mr Lawrie had been led to believe this was a sealed container but there is photographic evidence that this is not the case. This will be forwarded to Mr Lawrie.
- Concern was raised regarding the confusion being felt by the elderly particularly since there is the hiatus of no receptionist at all. It was generally felt that the well -being of residents was being compromised and as such contact should be made with the Powys Wellbeing Team and the Community Health Council to outline the Town Council's concerns
- Concerns were also voiced about the online booking system which should be up and running. It would appear from comments made that it is impossible to book an appointment through this system, only repeat prescriptions can currently be done.
- The vulnerability of the pharmacist, often lone working, was a concern

After much debate it was recognized that the subject was an emotive one but one which still does raise serious concerns for the Community and the Town Council. There needed to be an evidence based case to present to the Powys Teaching Health Board.

It was finally proposed that an invitation be sent to Mr Lawrie ( or one of his equivalent colleagues ) to attend the next Town Council Meeting in November to clarify the position and to obtain clarification that the Builth practice are obliged to follow the direction of the Powys Teaching Health Board.

Following the above meeting, a special meeting to be called with the Builth Practice inviting the practice manager, Ms Jane Stephens and Dr. Walters to attend. Kirsty Williams AM and Chris Davies MP also to be invited to this meeting.

This was agreed by all members present.

Action: Clerk to write to Mr Lawrie requesting a meeting as soon as possible.

Clerk to arrange a meeting with Dr Walters and Jane Stephens following the above meeting.

Feedback from Cllrs (contd)

**Cllr Van Rees**- informed members that a complaint had been received at County level regarding the Celtic Cross in St David's Church yard in commemoration of the late "Danny the Milk" Jones. It was stated that the Cross exceeded Powys Guidelines and would need to be shortened. There are apparently five more crosses in the Churchyard also infringing this height guideline. Councilors' felt that the Celtic Cross was not unsightly and was a fitting tribute to a well-remembered local man who had served the Town of Llanwrtyd for many years.

Cllr Van Rees requested that a letter be written to Mr J. Powell, who is familiar with the case with a view to exercising some discretion thereby allowing the Cross to remain and alleviating considerable angst of his widow.

This was agreed.

Action Clerk to write above letter.

**9. Twinning** -no issues were brought to the table.

**10. Library**

Much discussion was held regarding the situation with the library. The Clerk read a letter from Mr Graham Brown outlining the fact that if a decision was not made by 31<sup>st</sup> October then the Libraries that had not been supported were under threat of closure. This seemed contrary to an e-mail received by Cllr Van Rees from the library Service which indicated that Llanwrtyd had made submissions and that we were currently in the negotiating process.

Issues remain with regard the legality of using volunteers despite being informed that this was not an issue and that the Library Service could indeed train the volunteers.

Issues remain with regard cleaning costs. The position of the town council remains the same that in principle there is an agreement to accept the 50% funding to open for 5/6 hours and use volunteers to make up opening hours to ten. This requires confirmation in writing to give assurance that in using volunteers, no Employment Law was being contravened. There also remains the issue of the cleaning costs and whether they are tied up with the general cleaning budget of the school and whether we could use a volunteer to do the cleaning instead. The following observations were made by Councilors;

- Unless we had clarification on the legality of using volunteers the town council would be seen to be colluding with the County Council in replacing staff with volunteers.
- The letter from Mr Brown was seen as threatening, and gave an ultimatum that was confrontational in tone rather than co-operative.
- The lack of accurate information and the misinformation received by different people at different times has left the Town Council feeling mistrustful of the those paid to find solutions.

It was resolved that Cllr Van Rees and the Clerk continue to liaise with Mrs Thomas, Mr Macintosh and Mr Paul Griffiths and provide feedback to Council.

**11. Public Toilets**

The clerk informed members that no quotes had come in from those who had expressed an interest. Discussion ensued as to how to proceed. Cllr A. Jones offered to speak in person to both contractors. If nothing was forthcoming then other avenues needed to be pursued and contact made with other builders in the area.

If there was a quote forthcoming, then members gave authority for the Mayor and the Clerk to decide which contractor should be asked to carry out the work since this was an urgent job that needs completion by February 2017.

**12. Dolwen Field**

The clerk enquired of members if they required the Hedge leading down from the gate to the play area on Dolwen Field to be cut. Members agreed that this could go ahead.

Action: Clerk to inform Mr Croker to proceed with hedge cutting at Dolwen Field.

The Clerk updated members on the Dolwen Field project initial interest application. Both the Clerk and the Mayor will meet with Miss S. Price to discuss the application form and give guidance on its suitability on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October at 11.00am in the Council Chambers.

**13. Town Square and Green**

Cllr James proposed that the grant to the Gardening club should now be released. This was agreed by all members and requested that a cheque be sent to the treasurer Mr J. Seed.

Action: Clerk to prepare cheque for signing and send.

Cllr Rowlands asked if there was any progress with the finger post. The clerk informed him that no correspondence had yet been received from Powys with regard funding. However, a map of the boundary of the A483 trunk road had been received from the Welsh Office. Members were given copies. They noted that the Town Square itself was not included on the map as belonging to the Welsh Government and it was suggested by Cllr T. Van Rees that enquiries be made with the Land Registry Office with a view to the Town Council obtaining "Possessory Title" of the land.

This was formally proposed by Cllr P Tonks and seconded by Cllr A. Edwards.

Action: Clerk to write to the Land Registry and make enquiries as to the process involved.

#### **14. Correspondence**

- Item 7 on Agenda Responses from Powys Teaching Health Board regarding surgery concerns.
- Item 8 on agenda Letters from Mr. and Mrs. Couch and Mrs. H Baker re: development of Cym Irfon Barn.
- Item 10 on agenda Letter from Mr. Brown regarding library review.
- Item 11 on agenda e-mail from Mr. D Pritchard regarding Draft Freehold document for Public Toilets.
- Item 12 on Agenda Leaflet from Green Fingers advertising their Ground maintenance provision.
- Item 13 on Agenda Map of A483 boundary

#### **Item 14**

1. E mail from Mr A Davies regarding the ATM machine.
2. Letter from Ombudsman acknowledging Town Councils adoption of the Revised Code of Conduct
3. Letter from Chris Davies MP + posters highlighting the issue of Type 1 Diabetes
4. Letter from BT giving notice of formal consultation for their programme of public payphone closures.  
*This was discussed at length. It was decided to write a letter to BT outlining the Health and Safety aspects of losing the public pay phone, the concern that many elderly residents may be affected being left with no other means of communication, and concerns about the reliability of mobile signal in the area.*  
Action;Clerk to write above letter.
5. Letter from Eluned Morgan re: Community Economic Development Survey  
*Cllr Lambkin offered to fill in this survey and return appropriately.*
6. Letter from One voice Wales re; next Area meeting
7. Letter from Welsh government re: Local Government reform
8. Letter from Powys re: focused changes in the Powys Local Development Plan  
*Cllr Rowlands requested this document to read since it was felt that this opened up a possible loophole for development of alternative energy development( ie wind farms) in the area.*
9. Letter from citizens Advice requesting financial support.
10. Survey from Powys Community Health Council  
*Cllr Pace-Avery offered to take this survey and complete it and send off appropriately, particularly since it was relevant to the Town Council's concerns about the surgery in Llanwrtyd.*
11. Letter from Head of business services re:Draft rateable value  
The Clerk explain the contents of this letter and informed members that the rateable value of the properties owned by the Town Council had been checked and were in line with the figures given by Powys County Council.

Cllr James thanked members for their support in these matters.

Cllr Rowlands conveyed his thanks to the Town Council for nominating he volunteers for a PAVO award. He informed members that they received runner up in the Community in Action Section and were awarded first prize in the Heritage Siection. They will receive plaques to wall mount in the near future. Members congratulated the Arts and Heritage Centre on their success.

Cllr James informed members that the Spar supermarket would be closed for two weeks due to building repairs to the flooring. He closed the meeting at 9:57pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix 1

**Go Safe Wales Records**

| Monthly Visits 2016 | No of visits | Vehicles Exceeding Limit | Average Offences per visit |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| April               | 8            | 64                       | 8                          |
| May                 | 8            | 80                       | 10                         |
| June                | 6            | 54                       | 9                          |
| July                | 8            | 59                       | 7.4                        |
| August              | 11           | 139                      | 12.6                       |
| September           | 4            | 42                       | 10.5                       |
|                     |              |                          |                            |