

Draft minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday October 23rd at 7:00pm in the Council Chamber of the War Memorial Institute in Llanwrtyd Wells.

Present: Cllrs. J Rowlands (Chair), B Hodges, L. Haines, N. Price, G Rowlands, R Thomas, A Jones, P. Lambkin, P. James and T. Van Rees.

There was one observer at the meeting.

In attendance-Mrs Lynn Ball

1. **Apologies for Absence**-Cllr. P.Tonks.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on September 18th.

There were two amendments;

a) At point 4.2 it was requested that this be reworded. This was done as follows;

“Reports were given of recent disturbances in the town. There were suspicions that the selling of drugs was involved and it was believed that the matter had been reported to the police.”

b) At point 10.2 an addition was made as follows;

“Cllr Hodges said she would approach Laura Samuel and ask her to write to the TRA. Cllr Hodges also suggested that either she or Cllr Van-Rees alert Mr Ian Harris as a matter of courtesy as he is the new LE Manager to Martyn Bowen at Llangammarch Depot. The minutes were approved by Cllr A. Jones and seconded by Cllr. R. Thomas

3. Finance.

3.1 The following information was distributed;

A balance sheet, from 18./9/2013-15/10/2013

Pavillion Receipts and Payments Explanation together with balance sheets.

Half year budget update to 30/09/2013

As there was a great deal of information on this last sheet to assimilate it was agreed that members would scrutinise it and bring any questions and/or issues to the next meeting.

Cllr. Price asked when the Revenue Grants for Abergwesyn, Bromsgrove and Victoria Halls were due. These grants need to be formally requested by the committees of the halls. Respective representatives are to e-mail clerk with formal requests for this money. The LWParc playground project is due to start on 11th November and the first payment has been made to the contractor as a deposit. Three more payments will be needed over the following weeks and, as the Council was handling the finance, members were alerted to the fact that some monies may need to be transferred from the Swansea Building Society Account to enable us to handle the cash flow whilst the process of claiming the money back from the Aggregate Levy fund for Wales is in process.

Cllr Price suggested that it would be a good idea for Council members to see a plan of the project. It was agreed that a meeting be set up by Cllr Price with members of the Pavilion Management Group and LWParc Committee..

Actions;

- Clerk to send e-mail to Cllr Price with contact details for LWParc
- Cllr Price to contact LWParc to arrange meeting
- Clerk to contact contractor to obtain plan for play area

Cllr Van Rees arrived.

At this point the Chair felt it appropriate to remember former Councillor Brian Edwards who recently passed away. He paid tribute to him as a person and as former Mayor of Llanwrtyd Wells. This was corroborated by Cllr. Van Rees who said that Mr Edwards had contributed hugely to the provision of activities for young and old within the town during his life time, setting up many new initiatives. All councillors stood to observe a few moments silence as a mark of respect.

Visitor : Mrs Susie Abson (Rural Housing Enabler)

Mrs Abson gave an update on the planned affordable housing development at Tai Cae Mawr saying that things were still in progress and that the survey that was done in 2011 was still in place and robust for five years. The proposal is to build six new houses on the land above Station Road but Mr T Evans, the constructor, is not yet in a position to proceed until he has been able to sell more plots on the main part of the estate. Mrs Abson pointed out that help would be forthcoming from the Gwalia Housing Association which is based in Swansea as they are keen for affordable housing in the area. It was suggested that the target market would be for those who are struggling to get onto the housing ladder and that the terraced houses would have 2/3 bedrooms. This was very much a waiting game at the moment. Cllr Lambkin queried the size of the properties to be built and was advised that this is out of the hands of the Housing Association but that Mrs Abson would be able to liaise with Mr Evans when he is ready to start work.

Cllr Van Rees commented that the existing estate was a success as Mr. Evans had listened to the Councils' views in the past and is open minded and approachable in his dealing with the Council.

Cllr James made the comment that families who are currently renting properties in town may find they have to downsize if they wish to purchase one of these new properties.

Cllr Rowlands thanked Mrs Abson for her input on housing and went on to discuss the issue of what was happening to the “Snack Attack” property on Lfon Crescent which had been purchased at auction a few months ago. Scaffolding had been erected and taken

down and no further work had been done since on the property. Council would like to know what the proposals are for the future of this building. Mrs. Abson said she would follow it up if we can provide details of the owners.

Actions:

Clerk to contact Pat Dryden who may have owner's details.

Clerk to forward these details to Mrs Abson when acquired.

Finally Mrs Abson made a plea to Councillors to inform those who were vulnerable in terms of heating this winter to make them aware of help that is available in terms of improving property insulation.

Cllr J. Rowlands thanked Ms. Abson for her attendance and continued support. Mrs. Abson left the meeting.

At this point Cllr Van Rees updated members on progress with regard to the use of the Memorial Institute and its future. One proposal being considered is that since there are only three trustees remaining the trusteeship could possibly be handed over to the Town Council. Cllr. Van Rees said he would keep members informed.

4. Anti-social Behaviour and Vandalism

Cllr Van Rees reported that the new Station shelter was still intact with no evidence of damage and that he was "keeping an eye on it".

Cllr Rowlands reported that there had been a party in the Memorial Garden evidenced by the number of empty bottles that had been left strewn around. Fortunately there was no damage done to the garden itself but Cllr Rowlands had e-mailed PC Jenna Derby regarding the incident who said she would monitor activity in this area.

Cllr Rowlands also reported that the PACT meetings were to start again- to happen every two months with the initial meeting to be held at the Neaudd Arms on Saturday 7th December at 1 pm. Cllr Rowlands requested that this information be put into the December Grapevine and Cllr Jones agreed to do this.

Actions

- Cllr Jones to put notice of first PACT meeting into the December Grapevine. The Clerk will also prepare a poster.

5. Traffic Calming.

5.1 Cllr Rowlands reported that he had spoken with Dean Williams, Trunk Road Agency, and that he is keen to get the new signage for the Town done as soon as is possible, He is working with Jo Lancey PCC to ensure that all new signage both on the approach to and in the town is done together. Town signs coming into Llanwrtyd Wells from Abergwesyn and Cefn Gorwedd have also been requested. A petition was tabled regarding the Twinning signs by Cllr. G. Rowlands. The Chair distributed a letter that he had received from Mr Bryn Davies, Chairman of the of the Twinning Association, which voiced their disappointment at the proposed removal of the signs. Cllr J. Rowlands said that Mr Williams is trying to reduce the number of signs approaching the town on safety grounds and had made this suggestion for consideration. Cllr J. Rowlands had already reported the feelings of The Twinning Association to Mr Williams and so the signs will remain. He would reply to Mr Davies.

5.2 The issue of signage on the road to Cefn Gorwedd was raised. There was no record of communication about this issue And so Cllr. Rowlands offered to reopen dialogue with Jo Lancey about this issue.

.. Actions.

Cllr J. Rowlands to continue to liaise with Dean and Jo regarding signage and to resurrect the issue of signage on Gefn Gorwedd Road.

Cllr J. Rowlands to write to Bryn Davies regarding the Twinning sign

6. Town clerk Handover

The new Town Clerk Lynn Ball wished to have minuted the exceptional way in which Mrs P. Dryden had handed over her duties. Mrs Ball wished to express her thanks for the time given to her and to acknowledge the professional systems that have been set up to aid in a smooth transition.

Cllr Van Rees echoed this and brought up the issue of a farewell dinner in the former Clerk's honour. The date of Friday 6th December at the Drovers was agreed pending discussion with Mrs Dryden. The consensus was for a "buffet" and Cllr James agreed to provide a suitable menu.

7. Feedback from Councillors

7.1 Bromsgrove Hall –Cllr Van Rees reported that this issue was really no further forward but that he would be at a County Council meeting this week to find out what has been proposed regarding future management of the Hall. Concerns were raised as to any future effect that the decision might have on Ysgol Dolafon as the hall is an integral part of their facility. Cllr Van Rees assured members that the school would not be threatened by..

7.2 Hedge cutting –Dolycoed Road

Councillors were satisfied that this had been addressed and the hedges were now cut.. The letter received stated that the contact for the hedges at School was Alan bates should we wish to make contact with him..

Cllr Van Rees commented on the ongoing bridge work on the A483. Work has commenced but the crash barriers have been installed before the bridge repair ! Traffic lights still remain.

Cllr Jones and Cllr G.Rowlands expressed concern about the hedges along Station Road which they felt needed cutting back. Cllr Jones offered to speak to Mr L Thomas at LWT who is responsible for sale of land along the road.

Cllr Lambkin raised several issues:

- We are still waiting for WAG audit
- The bus Shelter outside the Belle Vue is covered in green slime.. It was suggested that Chris Dodds be asked to clean them.
- Notice was given of a new initiative at Abergwesyn Hall -A Table Tennis Opening Ceremony to be held on Monday 28th October at 7:30pm . Table tennis will be available there for two nights per week.

Cllr. Van Rees commented on the recent success of the Fire Brigade's open Day and the awards recently received by Charcroft Electronics , Drovers Rest and WAG at the Mid Wales Powys Business Award Ceremony. . It was agreed that the Clerk write letters of congratulations to all concerned. Cllr James explained that he often found it difficult to attend Twinning Association meetings. .It was agreed that Cllr James and Cllr J. Rowlands would liaise with one another..

8. Planning .

No planning requests were brought to the meeting.

9. Twinning

No further issues were raised.

10. Services

10.1 Green Bring Site

Cllr Hodges reported that every possible site in Town had now been looked at and that she felt that the one that best met the necessary criteria was in front of the station. She explained there were certain criteria to be observed before permission is considered for green sites. These are:

- A vehicle has to have easy access
- Site risk and local environmental risk assessments have to be done

There was still concern that the Trunk Road Agency had refused possible sites that had been put to them and Cllr Van Rees said he would write to Welsh Government Minister Edwina Hart to complain about the Agency's decision.

Cllr Hodges has spoken to Mr Ian Harris who is the PCC Environment Manager for the area and she suggested inviting him to the next meeting.

All councillors agreed to this proposal.

Action

Cllr Van Rees to write to Edwina Hart .

Cllr Hodges to invite Mr Harris to the next Council Meeting.

10.2 Riverside Public Toilets

Cllr Rowlands distributed a document summarising the present position. Concerns were expressed about the fact that we were being asked to make decisions without being provided with full and accurate costs for running the toilets, that to take over them would result in an unacceptable increase in the precept when the main users of the toilets are not residents but both travellers passing through and visitors, especially at the large events organised in the town, and that insufficient recognition is being paid to the fact that the Toilets are conveniently placed on the Trunk Road when those either side at Builth Wells and Llandovery are not. We should agree in principle to maintain the toilets and express an initial interest while we gather more information.

There. It was noted that a group of residents had met who agreed that the toilets should be kept open for as long as possible,. An honesty box was among suggestions for helping to reduce costs.

It was felt that a public meeting will not be appropriate until we have clearer costings to present. Nevertheless members felt that we needed to express a keen interest in seeing the toilets maintained while we gather more information.

After much debate it was resolved to:

- a) Write to Mr Richard Hobbs to express the Council's positive interest to maintain this facility.
- b) Write to Leslie Griffiths AM outlining a case for Welsh Government supporting this facility on the grounds that
 - The facility is directly off the trunk road and the only one easily accessible without considerable detours within 25 miles
 - Llanwrtyd attracts large numbers of tourists, especially during its special events. Copies of the letter to be sent to:
Kirsty Williams
Roger Williams
Richard Hobbs
PCC Chief executive
Cambrian Mountain Initiative for Tourism
One Voice Wales
Local councils with similar issues.
- c) That a public meeting be considered when more information has been gleaned from PCC about accurate costings and that if such a meeting took place senior officials from PCC be invited to attend.

10.3 Grass cutting

A letter from Carwyn Jones was circulated to all councillors in respect of issues raised by the Council. Cllrs. were generally happy with the response.

11. Open Spaces

11.1 Dolwen fields.

11.1.1 Cllr Price outlined the ROSPA report which highlights low, medium and high risk issues in relation to the play equipment in the park. These were mainly were of low risk and he suggested discussing these with LWParc so that they are aware of the report. Once the new play area is completed the risks can be reviewed again to see what needs to be addressed..

11.1.2 Management of Pavilion

It was reported that the electricity to the former cadet hut had been disconnected but the water not yet.

Cllr Rowlands reported that he had met with Mr and Mrs Ketteringham to explain the new camping charges and the supervision of camping at Dolwen Field expected of event organisers. Mr and Mrs Ketteringham nominated Mr. B Greenough to represent Green Events on the Pavilion Management Group.

The issue of the damaged door was discussed but whilst it was felt that Green Events bore some responsibility for this it was explained that the PMG felt that on this occasion it would be able to recover the cost from the payments that Green Events had made during the summer. Mr and Mrs Ketteringham confirmed that there had been reports of vitriolic comments made about Green Events at the last meeting. Cllr Rowlands told them that in his view that this was untrue. The Chair asked members if that had any recollection of vitriolic comments being made about Green Events at the September meeting, Members expressed astonishment and agreed that it be minuted that no comments that could be construed as being vitriolic had been made. Cllr James asked it to be noted that the Council's offer to pay for the door was a gesture of good will and should be considered as a 'one-off'. In future event organisers will take responsibility for any damage caused.

Sports Questionnaire

It was reported that 51 questionnaires relating to the Future use of Dolwen Fields were returned, mostly by young people. Amongst the most wanted activities were:

- Cycling
- Walking
- Jogging

A meeting of the PMG with Mr M James (Sports Development Officer) and Mr J Nash (Community Support Officer) proved fruitful with a view to creating a circular track around the outside of the field to facilitate these activities.

It was suggested that a few humps be installed and perhaps fitness stations at intervals around the track with possible activities for the younger children to find out /collect items etc.

The next stage is to prepare a second questionnaire which Cllr Rowlands will do to seek support from different sections of the community for such a proposal

11.2 Town Square and Green

The clerk outlined the proposed "Nectar Tree Scheme". It was agreed to proceed with the application with the support of the Gardening Club. Several sites were identified for planting, these being: Abergwesyn School, Station , behind Pavillion. As the application needs detailed map of identified areas Cllr Hodges kindly agreed to produce such a map for the application.

Cllr Rowlands reported that was about to apply to the Awards for All, Wales Lottery Fund for funds to establish planted mounds at the bases of the new Gateway signs,. He had met with Mr Ian Harris to ask for PCC help with the project. The Chair felt that the Gardening Club had a lot on its plate and he asked if members would be happy for him to submit a proposal from the Town Council.Cllr Van Rees proposed and all Councillors present agreed to the proposal.

Riverbank.

The feasibility study is in progress and is proceeding well with a report expected within the next month. A request was made to the Town Council to support this project by donating the sum of £52.50 as the Festival committee were unable to do so on this occasion. This was approved by all councillors.

12. Corporate Christmas Cards

It was agreed that in light of rising postage costs the Christmas card list be reduced. Many of the recipients will now receive an e-mail sending Christmas wishes. A revised list to be circulated and reviewed at the next meeting.

13. Correspondence

13.1.A letter was received from a Mr B Mcloughlin re: The Victoria Wells site –clerk to reply

13.2 Letter from Bryn Davies re; Twinning sign.

13.3 Letter R. Hobbs regarding timber transport and public conveniences

13.4 Letter from Carwyn Jones re ;Grass cutting at Cemetery.

13.5 e-mail from Heart of Wales Line Forum re; questionnaires

13.6 e-mail from Glasbury town council re; toilet closures

13.7 Letter from Mr G Green , mayor of Llandrindond Town Council re; toilet closures and other issues.

14. Training

Clerk requested information from councillors as to their training needs. It was requested that the list of courses offered by One voice Wales be forwarded to all. Clerk to do this.

15. **Miscellaneous**

15.1 Items for Grapevine

Cllr Rowlands reported that Cllr Jones had suggested to him that Grapevine would be happy in future to receive at no charge regular brief bulleted reports from the Town Council. Cllr Jones said that there had been a misunderstanding and had expected that a donation of £100 that the Town Council had given in recent years could be paid to Grapevine for this purpose. . The consensus was that the information is in the public domain through the minutes at the Library, TIC and on the Website and so paying for an additional contribution to Grapevine was unnecessary.

15.2 Cllr Rowlands reported that the Cambrian Mountain Initiative was visiting Llanwrtyd Wells on November 7th and that a seminar would be held at 2pm in the Victoria Hall. He had been invited to attend and said that the invitation was open to all councillors. About five councillors said they would like to attend.

15.3 Cllr Price outlined proposals for the Christmas Lights in Llanwrtyd and requested financial assistance from the Town Council as has happened in the previous year. It was agreed that the Council again supports these arrangements.

15.4 The clerk reported a communication received from Radio Wales regarding the 70th anniversary of the Czech Children arriving at the Abernant Lake Hotel. It was requested we provide information of anyone who can remember this event.

15.5 Cllr Rowlands reminded the Councillors of their duty to attend the Remembrance Service which is to be held on Sunday November 10th at St James..

Date of Nest meeting November 20th

Signed :.....

Lynn Ball
Town clerk and RFO
24/10/2013