

## **Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Wednesday 21st October 2015**

Before the meeting officially commenced the Chairman welcomed Cllr A. Edwards who was attending her first meeting as a newly co-opted Cllr.

### **Visiting speakers : J Kelham PCSO and Kirsty Williams AM**

**Observers:** Representatives from the "Save our Bank Campaign

**Present:** Cllrs P James, N. Price, A Edwards, J Davies, P. Tonks, P. Lambkin, S. Jones, T. Van Rees, A. Jones and J. Rowlands.

**In attendance:** J Davies (taking minutes of proceedings).

The meeting began with the Chairman welcoming the guest speakers J Kelham and K Williams AM. He invited WPC Kelham to speak first. Questions from Cllrs would follow.

WPC Kelham explained that she had been stationed at Builth Wells since July. Although it is a very large area she would like to be able to fully integrate into the Communities she serves and that she would like people to get to know her so they feel able to discuss any issues they may have informally. At the moment people tend to ring the police when something has gone wrong. She would like to meet and address local groups to introduce herself and distribute leaflets. In her view local policing needed to be structured to suit each Communities requirements. "Neighbourhood Watch" is soon to be overhauled and would be another valuable tool that could be used in Llanwrtyd, also, "Farm Watch" could be set up, however there is a dedicated Rural PCSO who would be involved with this.

The Chairman invited questions from councillors.

Cllr Van Rees enquired about the progress with the Neuaddau Farm Llangammarch Wells but as this is an ongoing case confidentiality did not allow for any comment to be made regarding this issue.

No other questions were asked.

Cllr James (the chair) asked for a Public meeting in the Victoria Hall (date to be decided) to be arranged with PCSO Kelham in attendance to start this initiative off and for a meeting to take place with the Thursday Club and Ysgol Dolafon.

**Action:** Cllr P. James to forward a list of local groups to PCSO Kelham.

PCSO Kelham was thanked for her input by the Chair and she left the meeting.

The Chair then asked Kirsty Williams AM to give an update on the situation with Barclays bank.

Ms Williams reported that she had written to the Treasury and to the Secretary of State for Wales (the letter from the Treasury is attached to these minutes as appendix 1)

She reported that Barclays were prepared to leave the ATM but it will be reviewed every twelve months.

Cllr James said he had spoken with the owner of the premises who had agreed that the ATM could stay subject to agreeable terms being negotiated with Barclays.

Ms Williams reported that the matter had been raised at question time in the WAG but as the subject was not devolved nothing could be done, although the First Minister agreed it was "an important issue"

Ms Williams went on to suggest several interim alternatives. These were:

- To upgrade to post office to "Local Plus" which would offer more services (letter of reply form Post office is attached as appendix 2)
- To attract Nat West to provide a mobile banking service (letter of reply attached as Appendix 3)
- The Credit union is going to launch a community High Street Solution called Cambrian Savings and Loans. They will be setting up new branches and this could be a way of introducing a new bank to Llanwrtyd. This something we could investigate further.

The Chairman asked if there was any possibility of journalists taking up the story. Ms Williams reported that she had spoken to several of them in Cardiff but none seemed to want to take up the story as it was not

news. Banks are closing on a regular basis. Ms Williams returned to the issue of the Nat West Bank who are also in the process of closing many small rural banks in Tregaron, Llanybydder, Llandoverly, Aberaeron, New Quay, St Clears, Burry Port, Llansdysul, Newcastle Emlyn, Tenby and Whitland, many of which are situated in busy Tourist locations. She urged Cllrs to contact the Nat West with regard their proposed mobile banking service as they had intimated to her the possibility of including Llanwrtyd Wells on a new route that they were planning which would also include Crickhowell.

Cllr Van Rees reported that the ATM would be fine as long as the owner was in agreement. If this was not forthcoming there was a possibility of housing the ATM at the War Memorial Institute. Also the enhance Post Office would be excellent as Montgomery has a mobile bank calling there and it seems to work well there. He voiced that it looks increasingly likely that Llanwrtyd will be without Banking Services during the time Barclays closes and new alternatives can be put into place.

He also suggested encouraging the Principality Building Society to come to Llanwrtyd but Cllr Jones reported that she had already been in touch with them and they would not take on accounts from small Groups and Associations.

The question of advertising for a new Bank Provider was raised. An advert drawn up by the Clerk and the Chairman were discussed but dismissed by members on the grounds of cost and possible lack of coverage.

However Ms Williams suggested organising a "Thunderclap" outside the Bank with the press mobilised. This would be a good way to broadcast to a very large audience..

Action: Cllr Edwards to organise this.

It was suggested that word should be spread of this event via Facebook and Twitter.

Cllr Rowlands informed members that he had been in contact with Mr A Davies of Barclays and that in reply he had said that they were committed to talking with its customers and helping them find ways to access their services.

The Clerk had made contact with the Banking Ombudsman but was redirected to the Financial Conduct Authority. The Financial Conduct Authority contacted the Clerk via telephone and said they were investigating the issue but they could not divulge conversations had with the Bank. If they felt there was a case to answer, they would act on it and report their findings on their website.

All agreed that there was much work to do and that a steering committee was needed. A further meeting was agreed for Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October at 7:00pm in the large room in the War Memorial Institute.. The Chairman urged as many Councillors to attend as possible and also any other people such as The "Save our Bank Action Group". He also reiterated his comments from the Public meeting that all efforts in saving the Bank should be a combined effort and not have splinter groups working in isolation.

Before Ms Williams left the meeting Cllr Van Rees informed the meeting that thanks to the efforts of Ms Williams and Mr C. Davies the funding for GP services from the WAG was now in place and that he had been informed of the future of Llanwrtyd Surgery was now secure.

The Chairman thanked Ms Williams for her hard work on the town's behalf. Ms Williams left the meeting as did the "Save our Bank Action Group" members.

**1. Apologies for Absence** : Lynn E Ball-Clerk ( family funeral) L Pace Avery (family funeral)

**2. Minutes of September meeting.**

The minutes of the September meeting were duly considered and proposed as an accurate record of proceedings Cllr P. Tonks and seconded by Cllr N. Price..

**3. Minutes of the Public meeting held on September 25<sup>th</sup>.**

These were duly considered and proposed as an accurate record by Cllr Van Rees and seconded by Cllr James. No matters were arising.

**4. Bank Update**

This was addressed and brought to a conclusion through discussion with the visiting speaker Ms Williams

## **5. Finance**

The Budget Update and the Balance Sheet were deferred to the next meeting when the RFO would be able to explain them. The September Balance sheet was proposed ,in principle , as an accurate record , by Cllr Van Rees and seconded by Cllr A Jones .

5.3 Clerk Salary review – after a debate by Council members, Cllr Van Res proposed that scenario 1 of many scenarios put forward by the Clerk to aid Councillors in their deliberations should be adopted. Cllr Rowlands seconded this motion. This would mean that the Clerk would remain on the same point at the new rate and increase hours from 10 to 12. Cllr Van Res also suggested that the Council should investigate the Clerks pension provision. This was agreed by Council.

Action: Clerk to contact Powys Pension department and make enquiries regarding pension.

5.4 Council members were informed that “Grant Thornton” will become the appointed auditor on behalf of the Auditor General for the next three years.

## **6. Anti-social Behaviour**

No issues were brought to the table.

## **7. Traffic Control**

Cllr Tonks reported that he had written to the Police for letters of support for funding needed for VA signs. Cllr Price informed members that if children had to cross a Trunk Road on their journey to School there would be funding from WAG. It was discussed and though that possibly this could be the same scheme that Cllr Tonks was involved with already.

Cllr Rowlands reminded members that the “Go Safe “ scheme should be due to measure traffic speed again this year. Action: Clerk to write and ask for reports.

## **8. Arwain Project**

The Chairman reported that the Clerk was happy to steer this initiative. A subcommittee would need to be formed. A debate as to what the project could bring to Llanwrtyd then followed. Cllr Rowlands suggested a cycling/walking .running track on Dolwen Field also other grants may be added to fund a car park at the field. A meeting will be arranged in the future.

## **9. Feedback from Councillors**

- **Cllr Lambkin** brought up the issue of the bollards on the Square which appear to be constantly damaged. She felt that the perpetrators should be asked to pay for any damage. However it was thought that the county council have adopted the bollards and are therefore responsible for any damage incurred.
- **Cllr Van Rees** reported that the ex-servicemen’s organisation, “First Choice “ was interested in taking over and developing the accommodation side of the War memorial Institute. This would be subject to a structural report on the building. He also reported that the successful outcome of the Health Centre proposed closure was due to the County Council being very helpful and the Llanwrtyd Wells Town Council being very proactive in its swift response and hard work to resolve the issue.
- **Cllr Rowlands** stated that he was now attending the world alternative Games meetings on the councils behalf. They had asked if they could erect an advertising banner across the main road in a suitable location. The council had no objection to this. He also reported that he was interested in the proposed Spa Town network. However , he could not attend the meeting in Tunbridge Wells and suggested a letter be sent declaring our interest and apologising for our non-attendance

Action; Clerk to write the above letter.

- **Cllr Tonks** reported that he had spoken to Mr Garland regarding the Town Square and Green. He was happy to meet the council but at a later date due to other commitments. He informed members that he had attended a defibrillator training meeting which he found interesting and helpful. Cllr Tonks was asked by the Chairman to arrange a training meeting in January and offered to arrange as much advertising as possible to maximise attendance. He has been asked by Carl Powell to contact as many outlying villages as possible to attend defibrillator training meeting in January.
- **Cllr A. Jones** reported that she had received the Poppy Wreath in readiness for the Remembrance Day Service and requested a cheque for the amount of £50.00 to cover the

cost.. This was unanimously agreed. Cllr James asked for as many Cllrs to attend this years Remembrance Service as possible  
Action : Clerk to sanction payment.

**10. Planning**

The Planning application P/2015/0923 for the erection of a conservatory to the front elevation of North Barn was considered by members. No objections were raised.

**11. Twinning**

Cllr Rowlands requested that Cllr Davies take over as council rep on the Twinning Committee. Cllr Davies agreed to this. Cllr Rowlands informed members that he now has the new Bryan Watkins Memorial Plaque. Its installation is in hand. No other issues were raised.

**12. Public Toilets**

The clerk has now received the Grant agreement signed by Alastair Knox and also this year's grant of £3000.00 which has been paid into Bank. She also informed members that she had renegotiated with British Gas to supply electricity of the premises. This is a one year contract.

A meeting has been arranged with Mr R. Griffiths of the Welsh Government to discuss the Public Toilets on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October at 2:30pm. It was decided to compile some questions to aid the discussion since WAG officials will not meet with elected members. These can be compiled after the Bank meeting on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October. It was decided that a subcommittee be formed to deal with the running of this facility. The caretaker Mr McLouglin has asked for two new toilet roll holders to be supplied

Action ; Cllr James to organise this.

**13. Dowlen Field**

Hedge cutting on Dolwen Field has been deferred until next year when a job spec and tender will be sent out..

**14. Town Square and Green**

The seats on the Square need to be removed for the winter. Chris Dodds usually does this.

Action : Clerk to contact Mr Dodds .

**15. Declaration of Interest Forms**

Members were reminded to submit these forms as soon as possible .

**16. Correspondence**

Item 4.0 on agenda:

- Copy of letter sent by Cllr Pace Avery to Jane Hutt
- E-mail from Adrian Davies in response to query about remaining open until lease runs out
- Also reminder of space needed for ATM machine.

Item 5.4 Letter from Audit office informing the Town Council that Grant Thornton is the newly, appointed External Auditor for the next three years.

Item 8.0 Arwain project (deferred from last meeting)

Item 9 on Agenda : E-mail from Cllr Van Rees giving update from Alan Lawrie regarding the Health Centre.

Item 10 Planning application P/2015/0923 erection of conservatory to front elevation at North Barn(Chris and Alan Stokes)

Item 11 Temporary unmetered connections for Christmas lights from western power Distribution (f/a/o Cllr Price)

Item 16.0 Notification of Builth Wells Community Support event at the Wyeside

Item 16.1 Letter from Powys Citizens Advice Bureau and Annual Report

Item 16.2 E-mail from Fields in Trust stating that they are looking into our registration requirements and will get back to us.

Item 16.3 Proposal for a Spa Town Network (first meeting is in Royal Tunbridge Wells on the 19<sup>th</sup> November

Item 16.4 E-mail from Powys re ; update on three weekly bin collections

Item 16.5 letter from Dyfed Powys Police acknowledging our letter regarding support for the VA signs

**Item 16.6 Letter from Mr Pritchard regarding vehicles on the car park at the Cambrian Factory**

Cllr Van Res Declared an Interest at this point and left the meeting. The issue was discussed by remaining members. It was unclear as to the ownership of the car park and it was felt that this needed to be clarified before any other action could be taken.

Action ; Clerk to investigate ownership of the car park then respond appropriately to Mr and Mrs Pritchard.

Item 16.7 E-mail from Welsh Gov. outlining details of meeting with Clerk re Public Toilets.

(Clerk is due to meet Mr Rhodri Griffiths on 30<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30pm)

Item 16.8 Letter from Powys CC re Community delivery

Item 16.9 Letter from Powys CC re; Concurrent functions and Village Hall Grants(copies for Cllr Van Rees and A Jones)

**Item 16.10 Letter from Mr Stickland re Ty Cae Mawr**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the meeting.

Signed.....

Date.....

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November**

**Amendments :**

Cllr Rowlands requested;

At 5.3 Inclusion of : \_Cllr Rowlands seconded this motion

At 7.Deletion of the sentence; He asked if the results from the previous tests could be obtained.

At 9.Cllr Tonks requested:

He has been asked by Karl Powell, the organiser to visit the outlying areas to train other people but would have to defer this until January. The chairman would organise the meeting in January and see that it is advertised in the Grapevine.

Replaced with; Cllr Tonks was asked by the chairman to arrange a training meeting in January and offered to arrange as much advertising as possible to maximise attendance. He has been asked by Carl Powell to contact as many outlying villages as possible to attend defibrillator training meeting in January.

Under visiting speakers Action; \_ Cllr Tonks to forward a list of local groups to PCSO Kelham.

To be replaced by: Cllr Peter J to forward a list of local groups etc to Jo Kelham

