

**Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council**  
**Facilities and Assets Committee meeting**

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Present: Cllrs Michael Theodoulou (Chair), Mrs Karen Francis-Morris, Peter Freeman, Robert John, Mrs Shirley Matthews, Mrs Lisa Mitchell, David Owens and Mrs Moira Thomas**

**Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)**

**(Senior Citizen's Hall, Memorial Institute, Burry Port 6.30pm –8.20pm)**

**1. To receive apologies for absence**

None received

**2. To receive members' declarations of interest in respect of the business to be transacted**

None were declared.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meetings held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

The minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 had been received by all members in advance of the meeting and the Committee **RESOLVED** that they be accepted as accurate.

**ACTION: Admin Assist**

The minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 had been received by all members in advance of the meeting and the Committee **RESOLVED** that they be accepted as accurate.

**ACTION: Admin Assist**

**4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February.

In relation to the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February there was a request for an update in relation to the costings for works to be undertaken. Members heard that it would take a while for costings for all of the works to be collected, as the challenges the Council faced were substantial. It was believed that the total works needed may require a longer-term strategy to deliver all of the works than the three-year strategy they had just agreed. The possibility was raised that the Council may need to secure further funding.

Members discussed as an example the need to make provision for additional office work space as the Council was in the process of recruiting for a number of posts which would

require dedicated desk space. A number of options would be presented to this Committee when the time came, but it would include renovation of the upstairs room of the Memorial Institute to increase office space. Members were informed that the TSO was exploring these options in conjunction with the architects including the possibility of construction works to switch the flat roof areas of the Memorial Institute to sloped. Due to the urgency for these works, members were informed that it may be necessary to secure a further loan to facilitate the works but that they would need firm costings.

Members discussed the possibility of making use of Pembrey Memorial Hall to create office space, with members noting that it may need to be considered in the short term but that a split office siting may not be a satisfactory solution in the longer term.

**5. To consider the budget monitoring report**

None had been received. Members noted that as they had been previously informed the RFO was working solely on the Annual Return.

**6. Consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members – none circulated.**

None had been received.

**7. Update on changes to Gerrans Gym to enable 24 hour access**

Members were informed that the Gym had started the process of clearing the space discussed during the previous meeting to enable the creation of a dedicated toilet and shower space for the Gym. There was uncertainty as to how far into the process they were and members noted that there was expected to be a fuller report at the next Town Council meeting.

**8. Update on asset transfers.**

Members were informed that there had been no change in the situation since the previous meeting, other than the Council's solicitors had been instructed to follow up on the asset transfers in Pembrey and they had reported that they were awaiting a response from the County Council.

Members **AGREED** unanimously for Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews to make enquiries at the County Council on the issue.

**ACTION: Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews**

Members discussed a recent meeting with representatives of the Town Band to discuss the possibility of the Council working in conjunction with them on a project to build a new practice room for them on Council property. A number of options had been discussed including the possibility of looking at space on the new Pembrey School site, but a combination of factors including the desire not to jeopardise the recently approved planning application for the new school and concerns over access complications and safety. Many at that meeting had expressed a preference for the development of the former tennis courts and for expanded car parking facilities to be provided, but consideration was also being given for

development elsewhere on site with re-development of the tennis courts to provide additional car parking.

Members discussed at length their concerns about the potential development, with many expressing that there was already insufficient car parking on the site, and although increasing the amount available was welcome, increasing the demand on the site by housing the Band there meant there would still be insufficient car parking.

In response, those who had attended the meeting with the representatives of the Band stated that the 2 proposals were being looked at and that both would seek to increase the amount of available car parking and advised members to wait to see the proposals before passing judgement. It was also clarified that the instruction to their architects had been to draft plans that increased the parking available by at least 100%.

Some members stated that they had concerns that any further development on site could increase the pressures to the extent that the grassed lawn area in front of the Hall would be put at risk, and that they did not feel the site was the right place for the Band to relocate to. In response others said that no decision had been made, that it was not in the Council's interest to jeopardise the grassed lawn and that they should wait to see what the architects came up with, and not make a decision without considering the wishes of the public.

It was clarified that the Band was not in a position to purchase an existing building and convert but could secure the funds and support to construct a new building. It was also noted that the architect drawings would not cost the Council any money as it was being provided from the support network of the Band. Members noted that if the plans proved unworkable, the task-and-finish group should be prepared to consider whether re-development of any of the recently transferred assets may be more appropriate.

**Cllr Robert John declared an interest in the matter as he lived adjacent to one of the transferred assets.**

#### **9. Update on harbour play area.**

Members were informed that the play area was progressing well and should be open in a few weeks. In addition they were reminded that the original plans had been for the mound for the zip-line had been to sow grass seed on it ready for opening. Due to the delay in the work starting, the seeded area would not be ready in time for the opening and the contractor wished to know if the Council would be happy to meet the additional cost of turfing the mound instead. It was noted that the Town Council would not have to find the funds itself, but would increase its request for Section 106 funds accordingly.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to recommend that the Council meet the increased cost.

**ACTION: Temp Assist Town Clerk**

#### **10. To confirm fees and charges changes as proposed by the working group**

Members heard how the group had met and were recommending that the Committee remove all of the supplementary charges for the hire of any of the Council facilities and to maintain the levels of charges at those previously agreed.

Members discussed the need for any potential users of the sound and lighting equipment of the Memorial Hall in Burry Port had to meet the minimum qualifications, which could be provided by Coleg Sir Gar. A preference for the following practice was stated, whereby the Council ensured it had qualified operators for its own events and that they provide any users who cannot provide suitably qualified individuals with a list of individuals they could contact.

**Cllr Mrs Shirley Matthews declared an interest as her grandson was a qualified individual who may be included on the list**

Members noted that those who hired the facilities would be responsible for anything they used but recognised that this would necessitate the implementation of a monitoring scheme to keep on top of it.

It was also noted that efforts were under way to identify individuals who could be approached to work on Council events and/or be included on the recommended operator list.

**11. Consideration of committee structure**

Members heard that when the committee structure had been passed it had been agreed to review it after a year. It was noted that since that agreement there had been a number of changes and issues with the working environment. Most significantly the workload the Council undertook had increased outside of that generated by the committee structure itself and would have proven challenging to deal with, with a full complement of staff, and that the Council had been managing it with a reduced capacity.

There were currently 4 main standing Committees, 8 Sub-Committees, 5 of which met as required and 3 meeting as much as twice a month and with 6 forums to set up this was proving too much work for the office to administer as things currently stood. In addition, those roles that councillors were providing assistance in delivering were causing them to be overworked and that “cover fatigue” was a significant issue.

Members were informed that although the Council were in the process of hiring additional staff to deliver some of the work, it would take a long while for all posts to be filled and for all of the new staff to be settled in their roles. It was estimated that that process could take up to a year.

It was requested that in the short term, all members be prepared to share more evenly the tasks they could do to manage the Committees and Sub-Committees. In addition, the Chairs Committee were recommending a re-structure to reduce the pressure, and to reflect the priorities of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, with a recommendation being made to the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee for discussion at their meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Members noted that the 4 standing Committees could not be altered until the Town Council’s Annual Meeting in April but that the work of some of the Sub-Committees could be amalgamated. In relation to those Sub-Committees that this Committee was responsible for it was recommended that the Bowls Club Sub-Committee and the Parks and Flowers Sub-

Committee be disbanded, and their work undertaken by the Facilities and Assets Committee instead. For information it was also recommended that the Public Engagement and Communication Sub-Committee be merged with the Events Sub-Committee. These changes meant there would only be 5 Sub-Committees and that only two of them would need to meet regularly.

Members discussed the recommendation with some noting that they welcomed the news as they had felt at the outset that there would be too many meetings generated by the structure. Others stated that although they may be tired, it was their priority to protect the staff and ensure the office has sufficient capacity to meet the work demands. Caution was urged by some not to underestimate the issue of finding suitably qualified individuals to fill the posts the Council required, as they had met this issue in many of their most recently advertised posts, and that this could further delay bringing the office up to workload capacity. Members noted that the wage/salary for each post was being decided by the Human Resources department of Carmarthenshire County Council with whom the Council had a service level agreement.

Members were also informed that the Chairs Committee had decided to expand its membership to include all Vice Chairs of Committees to increase transparency and to share out the workload more evenly.

Members **AGREED** to the recommendation made by the Chairs Committee and approved the referral to the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee.

**ACTION: Refer to FGP**

#### **12. To receive a report on meetings of the Chairs Committee**

A report was made highlighting that the meetings had been mostly to deal with staffing issues. It was noted that while Cllr David Owens had been away, Cllr Bob Walpole had stood in, as Vice Chair of the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee.

Members briefly discussed some of the staffing issues in question including noting that they had had a positive response to the currently advertised Finance Administrative Assistant post.

#### **13. To receive a report from the Chair of the Burial Sub Committee**

There had been no recent meeting of the Sub-Committee.

There was a brief discussion of the issuing of burial deeds, and it was confirmed that although there was no legal requirement to issue deeds as long as the Council maintained its record properly, it was a Council resolution for them to be issued.

#### **14. To consider any referred matters (if any)**

None received

**15. Any other urgent business at the discretion of the Chair**

A report was made from a recent Bowls Club meeting. There had been some minor vandalism of the club house recently but the damage was not major. It was noted that the Council, as the leaseholder of the club and assets would need to fill in the paperwork to access the Section 106 funding to do the previously discussed works. It had therefore been agreed for the TSO to seek necessary expertise and advice and to draft a work plan for the short and long term. Members also heard that the police had agreed to patrol the area more regularly and that the Council would need to look at lighting and CCTV improvements. It was believed that the maintenance budget would be able to fund the required works. The Bowls Club representatives who sit on that Sub-Committee had been informed about the potential changes to the structure and had agreed to attend Facilities and Assets Committee meetings, with their items of discussion to be dealt with first to ensure they did not take part in the remainder of the meeting.

*In camera* - That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**16. To confirm the confidential minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019.**

The minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 had been received by all members in advance of the meeting and the Committee **RESOLVED** that they be accepted as accurate.

**ACTION: Admin Assist**

Members discussed matter arising

**17. To consider the Schedule of Accounts.**

None had been received. No further discussion

**18. Update on the sale of Copperworks.**

Members were given an update on the progress of the sale.

**19. Consideration of staffing matters.**

Members discussed a number of staffing issues in detail.