

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

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
**Dydd Mercher 24<sup>ain</sup> Mehefin 2020**

**Present: Cllrs Robert John (Chair), Peter Freeman, Les George, Lisa Mitchell, Karen Morris, Andrew Phillips, Michael Theodoulou and Moira Thomas**

**Non-members present: Cllr Bob Walpole**

**In attendance: Paul Mann (Cemetery and Facilities Superintendent), Louise Robinson (Community Development Officer), Huw Thomas (Acting Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer) and Kevin Williams (Projects Manager).**

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

**(Via Microsoft Teams 11am – 12.58pm)**

- 1. To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mary Wenman.

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

None

- 3. To confirm the minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the minutes be confirmed as an accurate representation of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

In the ensuing vote 5 members voted in favour with 0 against and 3 abstentions.

**ACTION: Admin Assist.**

It was noted that the abstentions were due to those members not being present at the meeting.

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

Pg2 item 4 – re old Parc y Tywyn School site

Members requested that officers seek confirmation as to whether or not the site would be available to the Town Council for use as a temporary office.

**ACTION: Acting Clerk**

Pg2 item 4 – re: polytunnel or greenhouse

Members heard that the working group had not met because of the lockdown restrictions, and as such there had been no progress on this issue.

**5. To agree sub committees for the year and their membership.**

Members noted the decision taken at Town Council for Committees to try and reduce the number of sub-committees due to time pressures that were faced by Members and Officers with all of the meetings that were scheduled. Members noted that working groups or task and finish groups were a separate matter as they had shorter term goals and aims designed to inform discussion at the sub-committee level.

Members discussed whether or not there was a need to retain the Burial Sub-Committee or if its remit could be dealt with by this Committee and **AGREED** there was no need for its retention at this time.

Members discussed if there was a need for a Scrutiny Committee to oversee the decisions of the other Committees. Some felt that it could allow for better monitoring of the work undertaken by the Committees, others pointed out that this role was fulfilled by a combination of the Town Council Ordinary Meetings, Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee and the Audit Committee. It was suggested that the remit for such a role could be fulfilled by the Audit Committee although it was noted that this would increase the meeting commitments of Members and Officers as it would also have to meet regularly.

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

The RFO reminded members that the report in front of them was for the 12 months to end of March, but it was not the final report as that would not be final until after the annual return is approved. He clarified that this was due to spending on some budget items falling in the following financial year. The document still provided a useful guide to the overall picture.

The RFO called members attention to the following headlines:

- a) Income is shown at 157% although if the S106 is removed the percentage is actually 119% which is equal to £9000 over the target budget.
- b) Overall Expenditure is shown at 118% however with the S106 payments removed the actual figure is 103% which is equal to £4000 over budget.
- c) The Net for the year was therefore just over £5000 in credit.

He highlighted some big expense items such as maintenance works at cemetery, new containers, major repairs and replacing the boiler at Burry Port Memorial Hall.

Members noted that there were a number of items which were underspent and noted that as this budget had been used as the basis for the budget for 2020/21, there may be a repeated underspend in those areas again. They also noted that the Council's priority when setting the budget had been to keep the precept increase low so as not to impose an additional burden on its residents. The RFO was asked if he would be able to go through the budget and highlight those areas to create an expenditure forecast, which he confirmed was possible.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the RFO highlight the underspend budget headings to create an expenditure forecast for the coming year, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

In the ensuing vote members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: RFO**

**7. To receive a report from the Parks Working Group.**

Members noted that due to the current circumstances the group had not met since February, however the CDO had the following updates to give:

- The Project Pump Mil programme on S4C had turned down the proposal for the sensory garden due to its similarity to the project they had backed in Cydweli.
- She was working with the CFS on a grant for the Places for Nature fund, which would cover works over a number of parks, and drainage improvements at the Growing Association Plots in Pembrey for a total of £50,000. The expression of interest had been well received and the feedback would be used to strengthen the main application. There was an expected delay of 8 weeks between the acceptance of an application and the awarding of funds, with a deadline for all project work in March 2021, they would need to secure the grant quickly, and so the CDO was working to get the application in within the next two weeks.

**Louise Robinson left the meeting 11.30am**

**8. Nomination of membership to proposed Capital Programme Committee.**

Members discussed the proposed new Committee with some expressing support and others objections. There was concern that it would be politically imbalanced with current nominations and that the remit of the proposed Committee was covered by the work of existing Committees, with this Committee having oversight of the projects while Finance, Governance and Personnel oversaw expenditure and the Town Council overseeing the actions of both. It was implied that creating another Committee would add an additional meeting burden of Members and Officers and the work it would create.

In support of the proposed Committee some felt that it would give greater accountability for decisions taken with the extensive Capital Programme the Council had.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that this Committee oppose the creation of the Capital Programme Committee with the delegated responsibilities for the programme to remain with the existing Committees, and to not make nominations at this time, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris.

In the ensuing vote 6 members vote in favour with 2 against and 0 abstentions. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

**9. Update on asset transfers.**

The Acting Clerk confirmed that following the Councils decision the case files for the remaining outstanding asset transfers had now been transferred to Gomer Williams Solicitors for completion. He had informed them that the Council's priorities were to complete the sale of Copperworks and to finalise arrangements for the Pembrey AFC Sub-Lease and that he had a meeting with them arranged for later in the week. He stated that the bill for the transfer had been received from the previous solicitors also.

**10. Consideration of purchase of two storage containers, one for the cemetery, one for Burry Port Memorial Hall (referral back from Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee meeting 09/03/20).**

Members had previously agreed in the meeting held on March 4<sup>th</sup> to approve the purchase of two containers with a referred request to Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee for the purchase to be made from reserves as there was no budget. They had referred this back with some queries, before they would take a decision.

Some members expressed relief as they had second thoughts regarding purchasing containers for a number of reasons including whether there would be a long term need for the additional storage given the ongoing review of storage and use of space.

Members noted that the under stage area was no longer an option to consider for storage as it was against fire safety regulations.

The CFS advised that although his preference would be to find an alternative solution for storage at the Memorial Hall, there would be a need to store furniture while building works went ahead in the Institute, and suggested members could consider rental. He stated that there was no scope for storing items at other Council properties, which had their own storage issues. He emphasised that the additional container at the Cemetery was needed to ensure safe working practices.

Members discussed whether or not purchased containers would have a residual value given their need may be only temporary.

Members **AGREED** to defer their decision pending a cost analysis from Officers for purchase or rental or a combination of two containers, based on a 12-18 month period.

**ACTION: CFS**

**11. Consideration of risk assessment in relation to delegated responsibilities (deferral from previous Facilities and Assets Committee meeting).**

Members noted that the Council had resolved for each Committee to be responsible for their own Risk Assessments in relation to their delegated authority. It was recognised that there were wide ranging areas and issues that required a risk assessment that fell within the remit of this Committee.

Members **AGREED** to instruct Officers to produce a report to highlight the areas where one was required and to include reference to the relevant legal obligations and the Council's insurance policy.

**ACTION: CFS**

The Acting Clerk advised members that he held a monthly meeting with an insurance representative to inform them of any changes or ongoing developments regarding their policy requirements.

**12. Consideration of the pesticides report (*referral from Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee 10/03/20*).**

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED** that the recommendations of the report be accepted as Council policy, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: Acting Clerk and CFS**

Members noted that they would need to work to address the recommendations under points 6 and 7 of the report.

Members wished to congratulate the CFS for his work in preparing the report and the Resilience Forum for instigating the work in the first instance.

**13. Consideration of the purchase of equipment requested by the Bowls Club and the promotion of the asset (*referral from Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee 10/06/20*).**

Members noted that the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee had received a grant application from the Bowls Club for the purchase of additional equipment to allow its members to maintain the facility. That Committee felt that the purchase of maintenance equipment for a Council asset should be made by this Committee and so had referred it for consideration, along with the matter of promoting the asset for community use.

The CFS advised that he had found correspondence from the club stating that they would continue to buy and maintain their own equipment and that there was an agreement for the Council to assist them with the necessary purchases.

Members then discussed what the original agreement had been, which was believed to be for the club to remain separate from the asset and the Council to become the asset holders. It was recognised that the Club membership did a lot of maintenance work using their existing equipment and that this work greatly benefitted the Council as the asset holders. It was noted that any equipment the Council purchased in replacement would belong to the Council although the Club membership would be able to continue using it for maintenance of the facility.

Members noted that the situation regarding membership of the club had changed significantly in the time since the council had agreed to accept the asset transfer. There had been a recent disagreement among the Club membership that had led to a number of its members leaving, and there was speculative discussion as to the viability of the Club as an ongoing concern. It was also stated that the income generated by the asset was very small.

A letter had been sent by the Club Secretary to Cllr Mary Wenman, which had been copied to the Acting Clerk and the CFS. Cllr Moira Thomas read it out for members to hear. Its contents related to a request for support in the clubs request to the Council to waive its rental charges for this year given the present restrictions causing a severe restriction on their membership, the shortened season and their ability to raise charges for use of the green by visiting teams.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that an urgent meeting be arranged with the Club to discuss the request and their ongoing viability in the present circumstances, seconded by Cllr Les George.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: Acting Clerk**

Members noted that due to many members of the club shielding there may be barriers to the meeting taking place soon.

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

In relation to the ongoing issues over the “footway lighting” budget item, members **AGREED** for the CFS to look over the previously prepared report and identify which footway lights were disputed and for the Acting Clerk to open communications with the County Council to discuss the matter.

**ACTION: CFS and Acting Clerk**

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

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED** that the meeting move to in camera, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

*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 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the minutes be accepted as an accurate account of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

Members **AGREED** unanimously

**17. Matters arising.**

None were raised.

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

Members had received copies of the Schedule in advance of the meeting. The RFO highlighted a number of expensive items for members as follows:

- Refuse collection – there had been a contract penalty to end early but ongoing charges with the new firm would be significantly lower.
- Electricity catch up – This payment was due to discrepancy over an unpaid gas bill for a property that was not the Council’s responsibility. With the issue cleared up the balance had been paid.
- Gas and power - this was a catch up payment also.
- Grant software – this was for the grant advisor software which had already been a worthwhile payment with grants already having been secured.
- Structural engineer – this payment was for works related to the structural engineering work at the rear of the Memorial Hall in Burry Port.
- Maintenance supplies and equipment – these were both catch up payments for exceptional bills.

In response to a query the RFO confirmed that contracts were reviewed regularly and that the Council used a utility broker to identify the best options. He also confirmed that he had received advice related to piano tuning and so future payments should be lower.

The Projects Manager confirmed that he had attended a course on water management but that the Council still needed a contractor to ensure the water outlets were safe to use.

**19. To consider the Project Managers report.**

Members had received a copy of the report in advance of the meeting.

In response to a query the Project Manager confirmed that there was no reason not to use the cheapest tender for the Asbestos Contractor.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee authorise the Project Manager to seek the services of the cheapest tender in relation to the asbestos surveys and work, seconded by Cllr Les George.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: Project Manager**

In relation to the upgrade of the electrical installation in the Memorial Gardens, the Project Manager stated that Western Power were the only body who could undertake the provision of a new 80Amp supply. He had secured 1 quote for the remaining works.

Members requested that the Project Manager seek 2 additional quotes to ensure compliance with the Council’s Financial Regulations.

**ACTION Project Manager**

Members discussed the Christmas lighting in Pembrey and requested that the Project Manager and CFS look into the Health and Safety aspects around electrical supply during the lights switch on.

**ACTION: Project Manager/CFS**

Members discussed at length the progress on work in the upstairs of the Memorial Institute. It was noted that planning permission had been granted but had not yet gone out to tender as there had been no decision by this Committee yet on which projects to prioritise for the Capital Programme.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the following three items be set as the priorities for the Projects Manager to focus on, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman.

- Fire regulation compliance
- The upstairs room of the memorial Institute
- Structural works to Burry Port Memorial Hall

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: Projects Manager**

Members noted that there would need to be clear justification for which elements of the work were for major repair and maintenance and what constituted a capital project.

In response to a query the CFS stated that there had been some damage to the plasterwork in the Cylch room, and that he would be repairing it in house but it would also require some additional re-pointing work externally to prevent it happening again.

## **20. Consideration of the Cemetery/Facilities Superintendent report.**

Members had received a copy of the report in advance of the meeting.

In response to a query the CFS confirmed that the order had been placed for the cemetery gates, and that the clock face repair to the clock in friendship square had also been arranged, but both had been delayed by the lockdown restrictions.

In relation to the required work to the Gym ceiling in the basement of the Memorial Institute, he stated that it was specialist work to undertake the repair and so he had only been able to secure 2 tendered quotes, which members had received details of in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED** that the CFS proceed with the cheapest quote, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: CFS**

Members discussed their concerns regarding grass cutting around the harbour area.

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED** that the Council write to the Chief Executive of the County Council to request an explanation and for the works necessary for public safety to be undertaken, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

Members noted that there had been similar issues in the year previous regarding the grassy area in front of Seaview Terrace. It was also suggested that the County representatives be approached to support the request.

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

**21. Consideration of staffing matters.**

**Kevin Williams, Paul Mann and Ed Davies left the meeting at 12.50pm**