

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Facilities and Assets Committee meeting

6.30pm Wednesday 7th April 2021
6.30yh Dydd Mercher 7^{fed} Ebrill 2021

This meeting was held via video conference under the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) 2020

Present: Cllrs Robert John (Chair), Peter Freeman, Les George, Lisa Mitchell, Karen Morris, Andrew Phillips (arr 6.37pm), Michael Theodoulou, Moira Thomas and Mary Wenman (arr 7.08pm).

In attendance: Huw Thomas (Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer), Shân Loudon (Deputy Clerk), Paul Mann (Cemetery and Facilities Superintendent) and Kevin Williams (Projects Manager), Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant – minute taker)

6.30pm – 9.02pm

1. To receive apologies for absence.

None had been received.

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

Cllr Les George declared an interest in any item related to Burry Port Harbour.

Cllrs Peter Freeman and Michael Theodoulou declared an interest in agenda item 10 due to their involvement with the Food Forward Project.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED.**

Cllr Lisa Mitchell stated her abstention from the above vote as she was not present at the meeting.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes.

Pg 3 re: past usage of Council facilities and marketing

Members noted that the report had not yet been completed but staff were preparing one which covered a random two month period from 2019. The organisations that used the facilities during that period would be contacted to establish their intentions once facility hire was feasible.

Pg 3 re: covid safe working and vans

Members queried if the precautions being taken were appropriate given practices seen by some members of County Council workers. The CFS stated that the Town Council staff were following the guidance issued by Welsh Government and the County Council. The Clerk/RFO stated he and staff would make enquiries via their contacts at the Council to seek clarification.

Cllr Andrew Phillips arrived at 6.37pm.

Pg4 – re: Cllr Richard Adler memorial bench

Members noted that the CFS and Clerk had not yet discussed it with the family.

5. To consider the budget monitoring report.

The Clerk/RFO reminded members that this report covered February.

A number of items had been highlighted as follows:

Cemetery – Sub contractor maintenance, was high for the month however the year-to-date figure was below budget.

- Electricity, this was a large bill that the company had raised in error. A credit note had been received and should be processed by the next report.

Halls and Institute – cleaning costs, this was for the hire and cleaning of the portaloos at the harbour, and this figure showed two months' worth of payments.

- Heating, although this was a large charge for the month, it reflected the colder months usage and so it was not evenly spread.
- Electricity, this larger charge was also high due to increased usage over the winter period.
- PWLB loan, two payments were made annually, so although the payment appeared high, it actually fulfilled the budget requirement on a year-to-date basis.
- Hall refurbishment, this was the architect fees for the works to the institute.

Pembrey Hall – electricity/oil, this large payment also reflected an increased usage over the winter period.

Parks and open spaces – friendship square, this was a charge raised to pay for repair to a number of slabs damaged by vandalism.

- Remembrance gardens, this was the electricity costs to power the floodlighting and CCTV.
- Places for nature, The grant money was being spent from this budget and included the installation of the poly-tunnel, timber for fixing the structure in place and landscaping in the parks.

The Clerk/RFO stated that the overall budget was at 97% although he warned that there would be further accruals in the March report. He added that the Section 106 money and Places for Nature grant money would be in place also to help keep the budget as close to 100% as possible.

In response to a query the Clerk/RFO informed members that 2 issues had arisen in the securing of the loan, including the submission of a current set of accounts, which he was preparing to show the pertinent information and the second was regarding the approval process by the Council itself. He was speaking to a case officer to establish if the Council needed to take any actions in the meantime and he would report accordingly.

6. Update on asset transfers.

The Clerk/RFO provided members with an update on the sale of Copperworks. The original Section 106 had been based on the whole boundary, however only part of the site was being sold and so the revised plan needed attaching to the final agreement. The solicitor was continuing to work on the case and the Clerk/RFO did not believe it would take much longer for completion.

Members registered their frustration at the length of time this sale had been ongoing, particularly as the proceeds from the sale were needed to make improvements to existing facilities. It was highlighted that the justification statement from 2016 had outlined the annual cost to the taxpayer for the building to remain unused and boarded up and some members wanted to know how much money had been spent on it as a result.

It was noted that many known factors that had contributed to cause the delay. It was noted that as a result of the delays there was a possibility that the land had increased in value and it was queried whether or not a claw-back clause could be added to the agreement. Members discussed whether or not they could or should impose a deadline for completion.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that a time limit of 6 weeks be placed on the sale and that provided it met with the advice of the solicitor, a claw back clause be inserted into the agreement. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

Members also heard an update regarding the transfer of land at Pembrey Hall. The solicitor had identified a number of contradictory lines regarding the sub-lease with the Pembrey Community Growing Association (PCGA), which they were taking back to the County Council to change. A new sub-lease agreement with PCGA had also been drawn up and the solicitor was making contact with them. It was confirmed that committee members would see a copy of the lease before signing and that the signatories would be representatives of their respective bodies as opposed to individuals.

Cllr Mary Wenman joined the meeting at 7.08pm.

Members were informed that the Church in Wales had not taken up the offer of sharing valuation costs and had sold the parcel of land at auction.

7. Update on health and safety.

The CFS informed members that he was continuing to use the software to generate risk assessments to keep the Council compliant.

Regarding the hire of additional vans, he stated that provided there were no changes, the Welsh Government was looking at dropping to level 3 on 17th May, at which point he would be able to make review the transport regulations and make recommendations.

8. Consideration of terms of reference prior to Annual Meeting.

Members had received copies of the current terms of reference in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Peter Freeman, **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that the Committee should recommend acceptance by the Council at the Annual meeting. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk

9. Consideration of bin emptying at weekends.

Members discussed the matter, noting that it had caused problems for some visitors and residents alike over the Easter weekend. It was noted that this item had been raised by the CFS in advance of the Summer holidays. The CFS advised that there would be cost implications in providing this service to the community. It was noted that no strategy had been set by the Council as yet.

Members discussed wider concerns regarding litter in the area and where the responsibility lay. It was believed that the Town Council, County Council and Millennium Coastal Park team all had roles to play in this regard. Some felt that such a strategy should be driven by Councillors via a task and finish group.

The discussion continued as members highlighted recent problems with crowds gathering in the dune areas which had recently resulted in a large fire that had spread over the dunes. The CFS informed members of damage caused to the station toilets.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Les George that staff should contact their counterparts in the County Council and Millennium Coastal Park, establish what each was doing and bring data and prices to the Committee for developing a strategy.

RESOLVED.

ACTION: CFS

10. Consideration of moving the Food Forward Project to the Senior Citizens Hall.

Cllrs Peter Freeman and Michael Theodoulou declared an interest and on the advice of the Clerk/RFO did not take part in the discussion.

Members discussed whether or not the project being located in the Hall would impact those groups who normally hire the facility once lockdown restrictions allowed. The CFS advised that currently restrictions would be lowered to level 3 from 17th May, which would allow limited numbers to use community centres. He stated that by placing the project in the smaller hall, it would allow the displaced users from the Senior Citizens Hall to make use of the Memorial Hall as there would still be a limit on total numbers within a building and social distancing in place.

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell requested that a spreadsheet of use be produced and distributed to all members and for the decision to be taken at the April Ordinary Meeting. **RESOLVED**.

Cllrs Peter Freeman and Michael Theodoulou stated their abstention from the above vote on returning to join the meeting.

ACTION: Ref to TC

11. Update from the Environment Task and Finish Group.

Members noted the areas selected for planting and the plans for increasing wildflower and perennial planting. The CFS was still awaiting advice from Coleg Sir Gar on wider tree planting, and because the free trees received were only 15cm high they were looking at options for sponsoring tree planting in the Memorial Park and at growing creepers over the tree stumps to improve the aesthetic.

Because of the planned increase in wildflower planting, it would result in a need for a new larger composting area. It was noted that cuttings from wildflower areas had to be collected as part of the management programme. The location of this site had yet to be decided.

The group had also looked at a report on the electrification of work vehicles, which indicated a very high cost at present and would be looked at again in the future.

In response to a query regarding the tree planting in Waun Sidan, the CFS stated that due to severe drought in 2020, a large number of the trees had died, and that staff would be entering the area soon to clear out and tidy up.

12. Consideration of land adjacent to Tramway.

The CFS advised that the area had a lot of Japanese Knotweed growing on it as well as a lot of rubbish dumped, and so clearing the land would likely cost a lot of money.

Cllr Mary Wenman **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris to reply to the offer that the Council was not interested. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: CFS

13. To consider any referred matters (if any).

None were raised.

14. Any other urgent business at the discretion of the Chair.

Members discussed the erection of signs in the Harbour playground and in the Memorial Park playground that stated the opening and closing times. It was highlighted that the police had advised that without this information publicly visible, they could not do anything about late night gatherings in those areas.

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that a sign that gave the information be raised in those mentioned playgrounds. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: CFS

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell for the meeting to proceed in camera. **RESOLVED**.

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.

15. To confirm the confidential minute of the meetings held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell stated her abstention from the vote as she had not been present at the meeting.

16. Matters arising.

None were raised.

17. To consider the Schedule of Accounts.

Members noted the schedule.

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas that the Council seek local sponsors to assist with the cost of the portaloos provision at the harbour or for the building of a new block. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

Members requested that staff also raise this issue in their next meeting with their counterparts at the County Council.

ACTION: CFS

18. To consider the Project Managers report.

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Les George that the committee accept the recommended contractor from the Quantity Surveyor to do the works to the East Wall of the Memorial Hall, and recommend the Town Council accept. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Ref to TC

Members noted the advice from the Projects Manager regarding the appointment of a structural engineer for the works to the Memorial Institute.

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou that he contact 2 more firms and give them a deadline, and to proceed as required after that. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Projects Manager

Members requested that the Projects Manager contact one of the tendering Quantity Surveyors for the same project for clarification on potential conflicts of interest and itemisation of his work, and to proceed as required after that. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Projects Manager

19. Consideration of the Cemetery/Facilities Superintendent report.

Members noted the report but no questions were raised.

20. Consideration of cleaning provision.

Members noted the advice of the CFS from his report.

Cllr Andrew Phillips **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas that the Committee accepted option 1 as outlined in the report. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: CFS

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that the meeting should proceed beyond 2 hours. **RESOLVED.**

21. Consideration of Town Council and Bowls Club.

Members noted the document distributed in advance of the meeting. Some raised concerns at the proposed agreement. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman that a meeting be arranged between two Councillors, staff representatives and representatives of the Bowls Club to negotiate an agreement. **RESOLVED.**

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

Meeting ended 9.02pm