

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council
Facilities and Assets Committee meeting

Wednesday 5th February 2020
Dydd Mercher 5^{ed} Chwefror 2020

Present: Cllrs Robert John, Richard Adler, Karen Morris, Lisa Mitchell (arr. 6.35pm), David Owens, Michael Theodoulou and Moira Thomas.

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

Minute taker: Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant)

(Senior Citizens Hall, Burry Port 6.30pm – 9.10pm)

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Linda Edwards and Peter Freeman.

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

Cllr David Owens declared an interest in relation to item 15 as he was a governor of Pembrey School.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell arrived 6.35pm

3. To confirm the minutes of the Special Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Thursday 9th January and the Facilities and Assets Committee meeting held on Friday 10th January 2020

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee accept the minutes of the meeting of 9th January as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr David Owens.

In the ensuing vote 5 members voted in favour with 2 abstentions and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee accept the minutes of the meeting of 10th January as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

In the ensuing vote 5 members voted in favour with 2 abstentions and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

Members noted that the 2 abstentions in both votes above were due to the members in question not being present at the meeting.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

There were none.

5. To consider the budget monitoring report

Copies of the report had been distributed in advance of the meeting. The RFO highlighted that the report showed the budget totals at 81% spent, and asked members to note that if the unbudgeted Section 106 payment was removed, the total would show 71%, which was close to the expected rate of expenditure for this time of year.

He asked members to note that as the financial year drew to a close there would be some natural catch up expenses which would affect the totals.

Members noted that the next year's budget would include the budget for Maintenance Operatives.

6. Consideration of correspondence previously circulated to members

One item had been received after the members packs had been distributed, an email from Kidwelly Town Council asking if Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council would like to enter into a Service Level Agreement to undertake their planting and watering.

Members heard a report from the CFS that he had investigated how much work was required if the agreement was put into effect. On his analysis it would require the hiring of several additional staff and the purchase of additional equipment as Kidwelly Town Council had more planting areas and hanging baskets to maintain than Pembrey and Burry Port.

Members **AGREED** unanimously not to enter into an SLA on this issue.

Action: CFS to notify Kidwelly Town Council

7. Consideration of the Cemetery/Facilities Superintendent report (including storage report)

The CFS confirmed that the works to the Chapel of Rest had commenced at the start of February. In relation to the waste collection services issue set out in his report he stated that he had contacted the current supplier and received a confirmation of the cost for liquidating the contract with them. He calculated that the previously chosen replacement service costs, in conjunction with the early contract ending charge came to less than was currently paid out, therefore by proceeding there would be a small saving in the charges for 2020 and a much larger saving for every year following.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee accept the recommended course of action of the CFS in relation to the waste services contract, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

In the ensuing vote 7 members vote in favour with 0 against and 0 abstentions. It was therefore **AGREED**.

Action: CFS to instigate

Members proceeded to discuss the storage report prepared by the CFS.

Cllr Robert John declared an interest due to his membership of the Opera Society who utilised storage facilities with the Council.

Members stated that the report helped assess the current situation but that they would need to see a follow up report which gave costed/estimated cost solutions to those problems for them to proceed. They requested that the CFS look to prepare that report for the next meeting.

ACTION: CFS

Members heard that the Llanelli Ramblers had a footpath crew who volunteered their time to tidy and maintain sections of footpath and could be called on to assist if necessary, with the footpaths maintained by the Council.

In response to a query the Project Manager confirmed that in relation to the maintenance costs to prepare the Memorial Hall in Burry Port for the Town of Culture 2020 Launch Concert, this had been for materials only as all of the work had been undertaken by Council staff. In response to a second query, he also confirmed that planning permission would be required for the works to the end wall of the Memorial Hall, and that steps were being taken to reach this stage.

8. Consideration of training for staff and Councillors

The Committee was informed that it was increasingly likely that Town Councils would need to have in place a training plan for staff and councillors and that One Voice Wales had been approached to provide advice on how to set one up. It was noted that this may become a legal responsibility for Town Councils in Wales following the recently released report from the Auditor General.

Members noted that each Committee would have to decide its own priorities for training and discussed potential options including arranging for on-site training for a large group and opening it up to neighbouring Councils.

9. To receive a report from the Chair of the Burial Sub Committee

Members heard that Cllr John Hedley Jones had agreed to join the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee had discussed the following

- The improved staff facilities at the Cemetery
- Bacas software was now operating from the cemetery office
- The changes to the fees and charges for cemetery services

10. To receive a report from the Parks Working Group

Members heard a verbal report on the proposals for Pen y Bryn Park and noted that the local residents were being consulted with the plans shortly.

Members noted the plans included a meandering path which was wheelchair accessible and for five trees to be planted and had been drawn up with estimated costs alongside Council officers and with contributions from the Resilience Community Forum. Members noted that specialist advice had also been sought, who had advised on the trees to plant and that it would not be possible to be an orchard and a meadow and the site was better disposed to trees than wildflowers.

Members expressed concern that the Committee was being asked to give its approval to the plans without being given an opportunity to scrutinise the report and prior to the conclusion of consultation with the local residents.

The RFO advised that although the budget for parks was already overspent, he had worked with the group and identified sufficient available funds via virement that could be used to cover the estimated costs if the Committee approved it.

Members requested that the authors of the report work with the Chair the Committee, to add to the report the findings of the consultation and evidence for where the funding can be found and for it to be distributed amongst members in advance of the next meeting.

ACTION: parks working group

11. To receive a report from the Projects Working Group

Members were informed that two meetings had taken place and that the minutes had been shared digitally. The meetings had identified estimated costs for the full list of works currently listed for consideration by the Group, which came to a combined total of over £420,000. The meetings also discussed the order of priority for the list of works, although this was ongoing, the Group recommended that all works associated with making Council properties compliant with Fire Safety advice be given priority. They would then be discussing a timescale for the individual projects and for its own operation.

Members noted that there were as yet no funds secured due to delays to the sale of Copperworks and that costs for this work would need to be drawn from existing budgets.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee accept the recommendation and make bringing all Council properties compliant with fire safety advice a priority, seconded by Cllr Richard Adler.

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

ACTION: Projects Manager and CFS

12. Update on asset transfers

Members were advised that for the transfer request for the Station Toilets to proceed, it needed formal approval by the Town Council.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED** that the Committee recommends to Town Council that it seek the transfer of the Station Toilets, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell.

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

ACTION: Assistant Clerk

The Acting Clerk reported that in relation to the strip of land at Pembrey, the Church in Wales had responded that they wished for the land to be sold at market value. It was understood that the owners would be responsible for arranging for an independent valuation.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the recommendation from the Acting Clerk, on advice from the solicitors to continue to seek the transfer.

ACTION: Acting Clerk

Members were informed that the asset transfer of the land of the Pembrey Community Growing Association would not be concluded prior to the expiration of their lease arrangement with the County Council, on 26th March. Members noted that although this was not a problem the Committee could take any action on themselves, it would be an issue for them to deal with once the asset transfer was complete.

Cllr Richard Adler declared an interest as he was a plot holder with the Association.

Members **AGREED** unanimously that the Clerk should contact the County Council and ask them to arrange for the PCGA to have a licence to occupy until such a time as the asset was transferred and a new lease agreement could be established with the Town Council.

ACTION: Acting Clerk

Members were informed that the playing fields of Pembrey AFC had been successfully transferred and were now complete.

Cllr David Owens declared an interest as his daughter was a member of the club.

The Committee was advised that the S106 documentation for the sale of Copperworks was now being completed.

13. Consideration of the Committee's terms of reference

The Acting Clerk advised members that it would be better to deal with agenda item 14 prior to item 13.

14. Consideration of overall committee structure

Members noted that each Committee was discussing this item prior to the Annual Meeting as that would be when the overall structure would be confirmed for the year following.

Members were informed that a large amount of time was being spent at meetings with an increasing amount of staff time being taken up in preparation for meetings or reporting on meetings. They were also asked to note that a report had been drawn up which indicated that the current structure was not suitable for the Councils current working situation.

Members discussed what that current situation was, with numerous follow-on questions being put forward. These were related to the minimum required contents of minutes,



delegated authority for staff, working groups and Committees and the terms of reference and rules which applied to each.

Cllr Moira Thomas wished it to be noted that Cllr Mary Wenman had raised concerns at the potential number of meetings the Council would face when the current structure was being discussed.

Members noted that the Council was in a different position to when the previous structure was being discussed, with an Acting Clerk and numerous senior officers in post and therefore able to undertake tasks under delegated authority, whereas previously it was necessary for more direct control via the standing Committees and Sub-Committees. It was noted that the Chairs Committee had already responded to these changes during the year by reducing the frequency of meetings and increasing its membership to include Vice Chairs.

Members discussed whether the work of the Burials Sub-Committee, the Special Projects working group and Parks working group and whether these could now be undertaken at Committee level with the regular reporting from staff.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Burial Sub-Committee no longer meet with its work to be undertaken at Committee level, while the Special Projects working group and Parks working group should only meet until their goals have been met, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

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

ACTION: Acting Clerk

13. Consideration of the Committee's terms of reference

Members were asked to contact the Acting Clerk with any suggestions they may have prior to the next meeting as that would be their final opportunity to request changes prior to the vote during the Annual Meeting.

15. Consideration of Pembrey School site arrangements

Members heard that the Town Council had been approached by the County Council and Pembrey School with a proposition to ensure the construction of the new school at Pembrey could go ahead. It was reported that it had become apparent that the play area on which the new school building would be sited was on land held in trust by the County Council for use as a public play area. Following advice from an external panel it was understood to be possible for the County Council to transfer the trust to a different area and the responsibility to another party, namely the Town Council.

The request was for Waun Sidan play area to replace the land in trust and for it to remain in the possession of the Town Council. It was noted that due to a difference in value of the land, it may include a sum of money to compensate that difference.

Members discussed the matter with some expressing that their support was dependant on the details of that agreement but with all present prepared to give their support in principle to the idea.

Members discussed the due process, noting that as the public meeting on the matter would take place prior to the next meeting of the Town Council, the Chairs Committee would need to use its powers related to time-sensitive issues with a recommendation of this Committee, which had delegated authority over Council facilities.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue after 8.30pm, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris.

In the ensuing vote 6 members voted in favour with 1 abstention and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

Cllr David Owens stated his abstention was due to the suspension of standing orders happening too frequently.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the Committee recommend to the Chairs Committee to agree in principle to the transfer of trust with a final decision to be taken by the Town Council in light of the details of the trust agreement, seconded by Cllr Robert John.

In the ensuing vote 6 members voted in favour with 1 abstention and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

ACTION: Acting Clerk and Chairs Committee

16. Consideration of temporary Town Council accommodation at Parc y Tywyn old site

Members were informed that the Clerk was still awaiting a response from a Carmarthenshire County Council officer, Peter Edwards, on the request to use the old site as temporary accommodation while works on the Memorial Institute were being done. It was understood that the request had been received and a response was forthcoming.

Members were made aware that the Town Band had also approached the County Council with a request to use the site for a one-day event but had not yet had a response.

17. Consideration of fees and charges for Dolau Fan Cemetery

The CFS informed members of the following changes:

- To set a charge and allow for the Exclusive Right of Burial for 50 years for 1, 2 or 3 coffins, with residents to be charged less than non-residents.
- Inflationary increases to all charges
- Exhumation of buried ashes to be £150 as this was a job that required legal paperwork to allow it to happen
- The removal of laying to rest in the chapel of rest as a service as this was mostly undertaken by the undertakers in their own chapels of rest.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the changes put forward by the CFS and Burial Sub-Committee be accepted, seconded by Cllr Richard Adler.

In the ensuing vote 7 members voted in favour with 0 against and 0 abstentions. The changes were therefore **AGREED**.

18. Consideration of revised hub proposal

Members discussed a proposal for the hire of the former Swards building for use as a temporary location for office staff while works in the Memorial Institute were under way. The proposal included detail of the outline set up costs and the rolling monthly costs that would be incurred

Members discussed the proposal, with some expressing support stating that this would be a good short-term solution, while others had reservations for the contradiction in seeking to create a thriving “high street” and yet placing council offices in the former shop. It was queried if this property would still be required if the request to use the old Parc y Tywyn School site was granted.

Members noted that they would need a solution to the current office space requirements, noting that the Projects Manager was expecting the results of a bat survey soon, and would proceed with applying for planning permission as previously instructed. He agreed with the assertion that 9 months for the alteration works to be completed was a feasible timeline provided there were no unexpected issues.

The Committee were reminded that the Projects working group had not yet finalised the prioritisation of works and that there were no funds for any works to start until the sale of Copperworks had been concluded.

Some members felt that seeking to rent this space for this purpose may not be necessary in the short term while others warned that there was a duty on the Council as an employer to provide suitable workspace and conditions.

As there was no apparent resolution forthcoming, members **AGREED** to defer a decision on the matter to the next meeting, so that more information could be available for their decision, including that the order of prioritisation of works could be set; for a response on the use of the Parc y Tywyn site to be received and for progress on the planning application for works to the upstairs of the Memorial Institute.

ACTION: Assistant Clerk/CFS

19. Consideration of planting requirements/floral arrangements

The Committee noted that a request had been received from Wrenvale nurseries asking if the Council wished to place its order for plants as they would need growing on by the nursery. It was noted that the budget for flowers and planting was being moved to the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee for the next financial year and that a financial decision now would commit them to that purchase.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED** that the matter be referred to the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee for a decision with a recommendation to proceed with

the current suppliers and to put this issue on the agenda for their meeting in September also, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris.

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

ACTION: Ref to Regen and Com. Eng.

Members noted that there was now a biodiversity report produced by the Resilience Forum that needed consideration with this topic when the planting regime was to be discussed.

20. To consider any referred matters

There were none.

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

There were none.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell **PROPOSED** that the meeting move in-camera, seconded by Cllr Richard Adler.

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.

22. To confirm the confidential minute of the meeting held on Friday 10th January 2020

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the confidential minutes of the meeting of 10th January be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris.

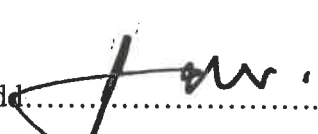
In the ensuing vote 5 members voted in favour with 2 abstentions and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.

The two abstentions were due to the members not being present at the meeting.

Members were also asked to confirm the confidential minutes of the meeting of 4th December 2019, which had not been able to be confirmed at the previous meeting due to there being insufficient members present.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the confidential minutes of the meeting of 4th December 2019 be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr David Owens.

In the ensuing vote 4 members voted in favour with 3 abstentions and 0 against. The proposal was therefore **AGREED**.



The two abstentions were due to the members not being present at the meeting.

23. Matters arising

There were none

24. To consider the Schedule of Accounts

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED** that the schedule of Accounts be accepted, seconded by Cllr Richard Adler.

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

25. To consider the Project Managers report

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the purchase of equipment and material to refit the commercial kitchen in Burry Port Memorial Hall to make it safe and usable, be drawn from the General Reserves and so be referred to the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee for approval, subject to meeting the Council's Financial Regulations, seconded by Cllr David Owens

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

Action: Refer to FGP

Members received a verbal report on the next phases in relation to alterations to the upstairs room at the Memorial Institute.

26. Consideration of staffing matters

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED** that the Committee approved the Acting Clerk to seek to establish an Apprentice post as part of the Maintenance Operations, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to the proposal.

Action: CFS

Members heard that there would be a forthcoming meeting to clarify the situation regarding delegated authority to staff.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

