

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Minutes Regeneration and Wellbeing Committee Meeting

Wednesday 11th September 2019

Present: Councillors Robert John (Chair), Pam Every, Peter Freeman, Lisa Mitchell, Michael Theodoulou and Mary Wenman.

In attendance: Huw Thomas (Acting Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer), Louise Robinson (Community Development Officer), Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant-Minute Taker)

Senior Citizen's Hall, Burry Port 6.35pm – 7.50pm

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Richard Adler and Shirley Matthews.

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

Cllr Michael Theodoulou arrived at 6.37pm

No declarations were made.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Wellbeing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 3rd July 2019

Cllrs Michael Theodoulou and Peter Freeman were not present at the meeting and so abstained from the vote.

Members had received a copy of the minutes from Wednesday 3rd July in advance of the meeting and were agreed that they were representative of the meeting and **RESOLVED** that they be accepted with 4 members voting in favour and 2 abstentions.

ACTION: Admin Assistant

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

None were raised.

5. Consideration of the Committee's budget monitoring report

Members had received copies of the report in advance of the meeting.

The RFO highlighted that it showed information to the 31st July 2019, and asked members to note the expenditure under Community Grants and the Council Community Events – General budgets.

Members noted that the percentages suggested they were well underspent for expected targets but that some upcoming expected expenditure would correct that situation.

Members heard that the Chairs Committee had met earlier in the week and had made a decision to amalgamate the Council Community Events – General budget with the Christmas Lights and Competition budget to be delegated to the Community Engagement Sub-Committee under the Marketing and Promotion budget they already controlled. Therefore those headings would be not be appearing in future budget reports. They were reminded that once the community strategy and plan was in place, this Committee would see its financial responsibility and oversight increase, as projects for delivery were in place.

In response to a query on the overall structure and responsibilities it was clarified that the Community Forums would help set the Community Strategy and Plan, that the Community Partnership would establish which elements of that strategy and plan the Town Council was responsible for, with this Committee expected to oversee the delivery of those project which would be budgeted.

Cllr Mary Wenman arrived at 6.45pm

6. Consideration of applications received for financial donations

Members heard that a new processing system was being tried out by the office whereby instead of sensitive information such as bank statements being sent out to members, they would instead receive a report from both the CDO and the RFO alongside the application. This report would give their comments and recommendations for each application in relation to their community benefit and financial risk.

Members discussed issues of transparency and it was clarified that members would still be able to see the financial detail that was submitted, but that they would need to make a request for it via the office and that no copies would be sent out.

There followed a discussion of whether or not, considering the potentially sensitive financial information submitted with applications, members should discuss the applications in the main body of the meeting, or in the in-camera section. Members agreed that because it related to the spending of public money, they would continue to discuss the applications in the public section of the meeting, however they were advised by the RFO to not discuss commercially sensitive information, only that information which was in the public domain.

Parc y Tywyn

Cllr Lisa Mitchell declared an interest as she as a Governor of the school.

This application related to planting, by the school on the roundabout nearest them on the A4311 in collaboration with a number of local groups and organisations. It was noted that this application had been received earlier in the year but had been held up due to unforeseen circumstances. The request was for £200.

Members were advised that in future they should refrain from discussing applications with applicants before they are received as it may bias their judgement, and that they should refer them to the office staff for assistance.

Members were supportive of the application but queried the responsibility for on-going maintenance of the planting. It was also queried if they were considering sustainability when planting.

Following the discussion, Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that they support the application and to instruct the CDO to begin a conversation with them to consider perennial planting and to advise them that the Town Council was prepared to undertake the ongoing maintenance on their behalf.

In the ensuing vote members **AGREED** to the proposal with 5 members in favour and 1 abstention.
ACTION: CDO

Bowls Club

The application was for £100 for the purchase of a hedge trimmer for their members to maintain their hedges.

Members discussed the situation noting that this money would benefit the Council as staff would not be required to do the work, nor would they need to share equipment which was employed constantly during the growing season. It was noted that the Club had received a large sum earlier in the year but that that was for a different piece of equipment.

Cllr Pam Every **PROPOSED** that the application be supported, seconded by Cllr Michael Theodoulou.

In the ensuing vote members **AGREED** to the proposal unanimously.
ACTION: CDO

Cymdeithas y Cymrodorion

An application had been received for £100 to pay for speakers to address the society during the year.

Members discussed whether or not the society was constituted, but no certainty could be got, noting that the advice of the Auditor General was for no financial support to be given to un-constituted bodies. The RFO advised that although their submitted accounts were fine, he had seen no evidence to suggest they were constituted.

Members discussed if there was an appreciable difference between a “donation” and a “grant” that might allow them to support financial requests from smaller bodies, but it was felt unwise to test the advice of the Auditor General in this way.

Members were supportive of the aims and intentions of the applicant but felt it wise to request evidence from them of their Society’s constitution and status.

Cllr Pam Every **PROPOSED** that provided the CDO and RFO saw satisfactory evidence of a constitution from the society, that they be instructed to proceed with granting the applied for sum, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman.

In the ensuing vote members **AGREED** to the proposal unanimously.
ACTION: CDO

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED** that a clarifying note be put on the website and on the application form asking for evidence from applicants of their constituted status, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell. In the ensuing vote members **AGREED** to the proposal unanimously.
ACTION: CDO

Cylch Meithrin

This was also an old application for £1000 to assist with the purchase of new equipment due to extending the age range of their intake down to 18 months.

The RFO advised that it was a registered charity and that they had submitted a good Account Statement, however it was dated March 2017 and that they should request more up to date information before making a decision.

Members were **AGREED** in asking the RFO to ask the Cylch Meithrin for more up to date Account Statements and to provide them with the advice of the Auditor General to the Town Council previously discussed.

ACTION: RFO

Members discussed how the advice of the Auditor General regarding constituted bodies, applied to the Council's resolution to allow individuals to apply for grants from the Council. Following a discussion members noted that there was nothing in the Financial Regulations that prevented the Council from sponsoring individuals.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED** that the RFO create a separate heading using an appropriate allocation from the Grants and Donations budget, to allow for sponsorships, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman.

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

ACTION: CDO

7. To note correspondence previously circulated to members (if any): Email from One Voice Wales regarding the Long Forest Project

Members extended a welcome to the CDO.

Members heard a brief update regarding the Community Forums, noting that the membership of the forums was not closed and that interested parties should contact the office; and that the Leads of each forum needed to be mindful of political takeovers of the agenda as it needed to remain representative of the community. In addition the aim of the forums was to produce a 5-year Community Strategy that was strongly inspired by, but not constrained by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

Members were advised that Cllr Michael Theodoulou had issued a statement as Chair of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee in response to the creation of an environment forum by the County Councillors for Burry Port. He expressed his frustration as he felt it undermined the efforts of the Town Council to engage and empower the community via the Community Forums. Members discussed the matter briefly.

In relation to the agenda item members discussed the need to start a tree planting scheme and to produce a biodiversity plan. Members felt that the Community forums were best placed to drive the plans for tree and hedge planting.

8. To receive any reports from sub committees

There was no update from the Planning Sub-Committee.

There was no further update from the Community Engagement Sub-Committee that hadn't been discussed already.

9. Clarification of grant funding for environmental projects

This matter had been discussed earlier during the Parc y Tywyn grant application.

10. To consider a request from staff at HSBC regarding local volunteering

Members noted that this had been discussed previously. After a brief discussion members instructed the CDO to contact Ysgol Parc y Tywyn and to link up the offer from HSBC Staff to the re-planting of the roundabout.

ACTION: CDO

11. To consider any referred matters from the other Committees (if any)

The Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee had referred a matter related to training. The Council was changing to a proactive approach as opposed to a reactive approach and was asking each Committee to identify the training gaps and to address them throughout the year. The training was available to Councillors and staff to help meet their responsibilities. It would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

ACTION: ref to next meeting

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

Members referred to the Emergency Chairs Committee meeting due tomorrow, a matter suggested by County Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, Executive Board Member for Culture, Sport and Tourism, in relation to the Town of Culture 2020.

ACTION: ref to Chairs Cmte

The Chair raised an email received from Mr Matthew Tucker who wished to receive the support in principle of the Town Council in establishing a local Eisteddfod.

Members discussed the matter, with many expressing support for the idea, although it was queried if it was appropriate for the Council to make a decision on the matter without consultation with the relevant Community Forum/s, given their imminent establishment. Members suggested it would be a good idea to invite Mr Matthew Tucker to speak with the Community of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language Forum to get their opinion before the Committee took a position. The CDO was instructed to make the arrangements.

ACTION: CDO

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

The proposal was **AGREED** unanimously.

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.

13. To confirm the in camera minutes of the Regeneration and Wellbeing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 3rd July 2019

Cllrs Michael Theodoulou and Peter Freeman were not present at the meeting and so abstained from the vote.

Members had received a copy of the in camera minutes from Wednesday 3rd July in advance of the meeting and were agreed that they were representative of the meeting and **RESOLVED** that they be accepted, with 4 members voting in favour and 2 abstentions.

ACTION: Admin Assistant

14. To consider the Schedule of accounts

The RFO gave out copies of the schedule of accounts which were noted by members.

Members noted that a 4-week consultation had opened on a staffing re-structure with staff.

Ed Davies left the meeting at 7.50pm