

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee Meeting

Wednesday 11th November 2020
Dydd Mercher 11^{fed} Tachwedd 2020

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

Present: Councillors Michael Theodoulou (Chair), Peter Freeman (arr. 10.05am, left 10.54am), Les George, Robert John, Lisa Mitchell, Karen Morris, David Owens, Moira Thomas, Karen Trimble (arr. 11.05am) Mary Wenman and Bob Walpole.

Absent: Councillors Rachel Evans,

In attendance: Huw Thomas (Town Clerk and RFO), Louise Robinson (Community Development Officer), Kevin Williams (Projects Manager), Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant-Minute Taker)

Via Microsoft Teams 10am to 12.54pm

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.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee meetings held on Wednesday 14th October 2020.

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

Cllr David Owens abstained from voting as he was not present.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes.

Members requested an update on progress on the newsletter, and the CDO updated them to say she would contact the working group once the next draft was ready.

In response to a query the Clerk/RFO confirmed that he had not yet received a response from the County Regeneration team to arrange a meeting, and he would follow up on that request.

5. Consideration of the Committee's budget monitoring report.

Cllr Peter Freeman arrived at 10.05am

Members noted the following highlights made by the Clerk/RFO during the September report:

Income

The £7000 income was for the digital community project.

Expenditure

A grant from £1500 had been given out to Pembrey AFC as instructed by this Committee.

The Blue Plaque dedicated to Francis Randall had been purchased.

The community support expenditure was for Fruity Friday.

In closing the Clerk/RFO highlighted that although the budget was currently under spent, however the Christmas lighting had yet to be paid for which would account for a significant part of this Committee’s budget.

6. Consideration of the 2021/22 budget.

Members went through the main headings to begin considering the budget setting for 2021/22.

Income

Members noted that they should not set a target for community events income as they had no way of knowing if any would be possible. It was also noted that they could not set a target for grants income as they too were unknown.

Expenditure

Marketing – members believed they should reduce the budget to £500 as they could not expect to be marketing if they could not hold events.

Staff costs – these should remain as they were only be adjusted according to reflect increases and on the advice of the Clerk/RFO.

Training and conferences – retain a small budget of £500 as this would allow members participation in online courses.

Christmas lighting – to remain the same as it was tied to a contract.

Floral displays – also to stay as per the original budget.

Community grants and donations – members discussed introducing a new element to this heading, whereby a certain amount was open to a “participatory budgeting process” whereby the public could vote to award financial support for community organisations who submitted projects for shortlisting by the Council. Members noted that this would be open to application from the Community Forums too.

Members were agreed in principle to the idea, and discussed whether it should be an additional pot of money or be drawn from the existing budget.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John for the £10,000 budget for community grants to be retained and an additional line for £5000 to be included for a public participatory award. **RESOLVED**.

Cllrs Karen Morris and Mary Wenman abstained from voting.

ACTION RFO

Community Support – at present this line was only a grant funding dependent line and members discussed putting some Council money towards this.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that a budget of £5000 should be set for it. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: RFO

Digital budget - Members noted that this budget had to be retained until the review was completed. Staff informed members that there had been a number of issues, with many hubs not having been operational for an unknown period of time. It was not known why the Town Council had been notified. Officers were currently preparing a report on the matter for discussion at the next meeting.

ACTION: CDO

Members discussed two additional items for consideration. Provision of support for local businesses via a small start-up grant facility. Members noted the need for such support, and discussed the level of support to provide.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr David Owens that a budget of £5000 be set, for grants of up to £500 to be made available. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: RFO

Christmas market – members noted the success of the small market held in 2019 and discussed the need for a budget to provide for a larger event in 2021 if possible. Noting that this may require a temporary road closure.

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr David Owens that a budget of £5000 be set for this item. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: RFO

Members agreed to deal with agenda item 15 next.

15. Update on plans for Town of Culture 2021.

The CDO advised that the Committee should proceed with the programme that had been approved for 2020, as the groundwork was in place already. Although there would be uncertainty as to which if any of the events could take place during the year it would be easier to plan ahead and cancel if necessary. She confirmed that following recent conversations Marine Group had indicated their desire to host events at the harbour and to provide a certain amount of sponsorship where appropriate.

The working group had not yet met, and it required additional members. Cllr Lisa Mitchell volunteered to sit on it. Members would be sent an agenda and necessary information and the CDO would arrange their first meeting.

ACTION: CDO

Members discussed what budget to set for the events. The RFO advised that there was a £13,000 budget for community events. Members **AGREED** for the Town of Culture programme to draw its resources from that budget.

ACTION: RFO

It was noted that some events, if able to be held would generate some income, and it was believed a line should be included to allow for that, but for no budget to be set as it was an unknown.

Cllr Peter Freeman left the meeting at 10.54am.

Members **AGREED** to a recess to allow for a 2-minute silence to be observed at 11am for Remembrance. 10.54am.

Members resumed the meeting at 11.05am.

Cllr Karen Trimble joined the meeting at 11.05am

7. Consideration of applications received for financial donations.

None had been received.

8. Update on grants applied for/received.

The CDO had provided members with a report in advance of the meeting, which gave a breakdown on expenditure and activity on the grants currently received by the Town Council. It also included information about grants being applied for.

The CDO was looking to apply to the Food Poverty Fund for additional equipment to increase and improve the Meals on Wheels service and the In This Together fund to help purchase the Christmas food hampers initiative.

The Food Poverty Fund would be used to purchase a chest freezer to allow larger storage and to expand the menu options, to replace the dishwasher and the purchase of a few smaller items such as a stick blender. The CDO confirmed that the purchases made had to demonstrate an impact on food poverty in the community to be eligible.

Members discussed the recent information they had received regarding the Section 106 funding for Pembrey and Burry Port. It was noted that £128,000 from the fund was going to a project in Berwig in Llanelli, following another large amount within the previous five years to a project in Bynea. Members wanted to know why it had not been spent in Pembrey or Burry Port. It was noted that there was obligation on the County Council, who managed the fund, to notify Town Councils of the availability of funds, however County Councillors were informed and consulted regarding allocation.

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman, that the Clerk contact Cllr Hugh Shepardson to clarify the process of application for S106 funds and then to prepare a letter be sent to the County Councillors for Burry Port to enquire why in the last 5 years over £300,000 of S106 money had not been secured for Burry Port, and why there had been no consultation with the Town Council or community on the earmarked funds resulting from current building developments.

RESOLVED

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

The CDO had a further update which would need to be addressed in camera at the end of the meeting.

9. Update from community forums.

Economy

Members received a report from the recent Economy Forum meeting. Their focus was to build on the success of the initiative to introduce more apprentice posts in the community. They were looking at encouraging support for the Kickstart scheme, which was being run by the County Council. They were also looking to build on their Buy Local scheme for Christmas, the feasibility of a Pembrey and Burry Port voucher scheme and working on the Christmas hampers scheme. They were also going to assess the possibility of resurrecting the chamber of commerce for the town.

It was requested that at the next meeting of this Committee, the Kickstart scheme be placed on the agenda for discussion. A request would be made to the Facilities and Assets Committee to do the same. Members asked for a report to accompany that item for an informed discussion.

RESOLVED.

ACTION: CDO

Members asked the forum to look at ways for encouraging more work experience posts in the community.

Health

The forum had met recently and had expressed an interest in the Connected Kindness project being run by the County Council. They had worked to produce a quiz to accompany the Meals on Wheels deliveries to entertain their users, and the CDO had arranged for schoolchildren to produce letters also. They were focussing on dealing with the challenges of loneliness during this coming Christmas period.

They had recommended that the Meals on Wheels scheme be promoted using the Churches and Chapels in the area as well as social media, once capacity could be increased.

Joint forums

The CDO reported that they had met recently and from the Cohesive aspect had looked at creating a legacy for the Town of Culture 2021 by asking the community to help design and build a bandstand near to the harbour.

Members were supportive of the idea but noted that the idea had been raised previously with some opposition from the community as it was seen as frivolous. The CDO stated she would try and seek funding for any such development and would look to work with the Marine Group liaison officer for any support they could offer.

Resilience

Members were informed of the response received from the County Council to a letter regarding litter in the town. It stated there was a review taking place of the bin provision around the harbour and the coastal path over the autumn.

Members noted that Council staff were already in discussions with the County Council on the subject of place-based services such as these, and that the response would be raised at the next meeting.

It was noted that the Grab and Bag group had decided not to work with Cetma as they wished to remain independent. They were looking at seeking the placement of empty oil barrels along the coastal path to encourage litter deposition in them.

The forum had adopted a logo and agreed a slogan to help clarify their remit. "Our patch, our planet: enabling our environment to flourish"

Meetings had taken place with the school on the Pen y Bryn orchard development. It was noted that the forums water vole survey was on hold due to covid. There was however a national venture looking to survey voles which may benefit their efforts. The Forum had also noted the ongoing work of the Toad Patrol. There was a discussion of the destruction of hedgerows and trees in the property to the north of Pembrey Memorial Hall. It was noted there was a national survey of Dormice taking place.

They had looked at a number of suggestions for improving the look of the community as follows:

- The surfacing and look of the recycling area by Scotts Yard.
- Coop development – National Rail submitted concern on proximity to railway and flooding was noted.
- The bandstand idea.
- Replanting of flower boxes on harbour also train station.
- Lighthouse painting and renovation.
- Arts on promenade as part of the Town of Culture.
- Looking to speak with Pembrey and Burry Port Cycling club on installing bike stands and cycle hire possibilities.
- Spaces for planting trees in the Memorial Park

Members noted that as the forums work increased, this item would only get larger, and so it was requested that this item take the form of written reports to be submitted in future.

ACTION: CDO

10. Consideration of community support.

Due to the success of the Meals on Wheels, the CDO was looking to expand it to a second day from January, but to do so more volunteers would be needed and so was informing members she would be recruiting.

Members **AGREED** provided sufficient safeguarding measures were in place.

ACTION: CDO

Following the success of the children’s keep fit challenge, a video of their efforts was being finalised. There was sufficient resources available to run the scheme again over the winter break.

Members were concerned that there might be too much work on for the CDO, but she confirmed the registration was the only element that required her time.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman that the scheme be approved.
RESOLVED

ACTION: CDO

It was reported that the Halloween even had been very popular with 3 teams having to distribute the treat bags, and there was a call for a similar decoration competition over Christmas.

Members were **AGREED** for the competition to be run with a £25 prize for each winner.
RESOLVED.

ACTION: CDO

Members thanked the CDO for her work on the Remembrance video. Members asked if for the next event Ministers of other denominations could be asked to give a prayer in addition to the vicar. It was noted that the Actif Sir Gar project would be starting shortly.

Members discussed the administration of the Christmas hampers programme, particularly over the decision-making process for which households would receive them. Members noted that there was currently a budget for 30, and that if the number of referrals and applications was below that number, no decision would be needed. Members discussed whether the Community Support working group could make those decisions if needed and noted that they would need criteria to make those decisions against. Members were agreed that a deadline would be needed for applications also.

Members noted that the Business Christmas window competition was going ahead, and that the Lights switch on video was ready to go once the lighting was in situ.

Members raised concerns on the website, noting that it was not currently very effective at supporting the community and providing them with the information they needed.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the meeting be allowed to continue for longer than 2 hours. **RESOLVED**.

11. Consideration of local policing forums

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED** seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that a request be made to the police to set up a regular meeting forum to discuss policing matters. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: CDO

12. Consideration of lighthouse refurbishment.

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr David Owens that an approach be made to the County Council to seek refurbishment of the lighthouse as it was beginning to look run-down and needed some repairs. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Clerk/RFO

13. Consideration of “parklets”.

Members discussed this initiative that had been received from the County Council, and whether or not to put in an expression of interest. It was noted that this was related to roadside parking spaces and members were of the opinion there was already insufficient parking spaces in town, and that this would not be a popular initiative for local businesses.

Members **RESOLVED** not to take up the offer as they had other priorities and it would create more work for officers.

NO ACTION

14. Update on website app in respect of community engagement.

Members noted that the current website did not do a lot on community engagement. The CDO was currently looking at options for upgrading it to support her work. She requested permission to seek quotes to make the necessary improvements to the website.

Members **RESOLVED** in favour of granting the permission

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

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of Cllr Peter Freeman to the **Public Transport forum**.

The Clerk/RFO asked members to consider a matter raised by the Projects Manager that required an urgent decision. The Projects Manager outlined the costs the Council currently faced for the provision of the toilets at the harbour. He had consulted with the provider and the cleaners on what the current usage level was. Given that information he recommended the Council seek to reduce the current provision from 4 to 2 units which would be emptied and cleaned twice a week by the provider, with the Council's cleaner doing 1 additional clean on a different day. Such a course would reduce the Council's costs significantly for the duration of the temporary toilets provision.

As a medium term solution he reminded members of the report he had produced previously which gave the costs for a converted container solution which would be a good short and medium term solution if that was the Council's wish. He stated that the converted container could be viewed as an asset for re-sale once no longer needed.

Members considered whether or not they should continue provision beyond December which was the current deadline. Members noted that the decision to provide them had been taken as part of this Committee's covid response, and longer term solutions would need to be considered by the Facilities and Assets Committee.

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas to reduce the toilet provision from 4 to 2 cubicles and for the recommended changes to the cleaning regime, there would be a review of ongoing provision in the December meeting. **RESOLVED**.

ACTION: Projects Manager

Cllr Les George **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the meeting 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.

17. To consider the schedule of accounts.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the schedule be accepted. **RESOLVED**.

Members were asked to consider a time pressured matter relating to an expression of interest for a financial grant.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou declared an interest in the matter and left the meeting at 12.30pm. Cllr Karen Morris took over as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

An in-depth discussion took place.

Cllr Bob Walpole **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell for the CDO to be approved to submit the expression of interest for the grant. **RESOLVED**.

Meeting ended 12.54pm