

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee Meeting

6.30pm Wednesday 14th October 2020

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

Present: Councillors Michael Theodoulou (Chair), Peter Freeman, Les George, Robert John, Lisa Mitchell, Karen Morris, Moira Thomas, Mary Wenman and Bob Walpole.

Absent: Councillors Rachel Evans, Karen Trimble

In attendance: Huw Thomas (Town Clerk and RFO), Shân Loudon (Deputy Clerk), Louise Robinson (Community Development Officer), Ed Davies (Administrative Assistant-Minute Taker)

Via Microsoft Teams 6.30pm to 8.25pm

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies had been received from Cllr David Owens.

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

Cllr Les George declared an interest in any item linked to the harbour.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee meetings held on Wednesday 9th September 2020, and Friday 2nd October 2020

Members requested a change to the minutes of Wednesday 9th September to clarify a decision. Provided this change was made, members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour that they were an accurate representation of the meeting.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour of the minutes of the 2nd October as being an accurate representation of the meeting.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

In relation to the minutes of the 9th September members noted that an item on local policing had not been included on the agenda and requested it be included for the next meeting.

Members were informed that the website review was ongoing.

In relation to the harbour, members noted that an item had been added to the Town Council agenda to discuss the future plans for the harbour.

Members also noted that a Christmas tree would not be placed on the roundabout by the railway bridge.

It was noted that no joint public statement had yet been prepared with Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths.

In relation to the minutes of the 2nd October there were no matters arising.

5. Consideration of the Committee's budget monitoring report

The Clerk/RFO guided members through the report, which was largely the same as their previous report. There was no income from events due to current circumstances. However, there was an income for the Community Resilience Grant of £35,000. The Clerk/RFO explained that the amount was the first part of a two stage payment to the total of £50,000. Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the report.

6. Consideration of applications received for financial donations

Members had received copies of the donation requests as follows:

Scouts, Cubs and Beavers - £600

Although this appeared as one application for £600, it would be divided equally between the three named groups as they had a joint account and so needed assessing as one.

The CDO informed members that this was to cover their running costs while they continued to meet digitally, rent when they reopen, insurance for their activities and membership to the larger scouting organisation. Members discussed the work of the groups that they were aware of and the hard work of their volunteers was noted. Following discussion and advice from the Clerk/RFO, members noted that in light of their recent decision to halve their grants budget it may be pertinent to also halve the donation amount to allow its funds to go further. Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman for half of the requested amount (£300) be awarded. **RESOLVED**
ACTION: CDO

Dyfed Powys Police Fund

Members heard that this was an open ended request from the local police force to contribute to their fund which was used to support local groups and organisations. The Police had contributed £10,000 and this had been added to through donations from bodies and organisations to £13,000. Members discussed the request noting that it had already halved its own budget for helping the community with grants. There was also a query as to the legal position of using tax payers money to give to a different body for allocation. Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to continue to provide the community with support via its own grants system.

7. Update on grants applied for/received

The CDO had provided members with a sheet detailing the grants that were running and their current progress. She reported that the application to the Coastal Community Grant had not been successful. However, their feedback had been positive and they had recommended it be submitted to the National Lottery Community Fund for consideration. Members **RESOLVED** in favour of the application being submitted to the National Lottery Community Fund.
ACTION: CDO

The CDO added that she was also looking at a number of smaller funds to supplement the larger one by targeting parallel projects or through match funding.

8. Update from community forums

Health Forum

The forum had met the day previously and discussed a number of topics as follows:

- A potential project on building bird boxes with Pembrey School.
- A quiz via Facebook, with a certificate for the winner.
- A walking treasure hunt for the public to do in their own time.
- A photo quiz of “where in Burry Port is this”.
- The Meals on Wheels scheme.
- Preparing an article on the forum to share via Facebook.

Culture Forum

The forum would be meeting at the end of the month.

Resilience Forum

The forum had met on 29th September which was their first meeting since March. They had mostly dealt with updates as follows:

- Discussion on the subject of a local keep tidy campaign, as organised litter picks were not allowed. Tedi Tywyn would promote this with school visits.
- One member would be writing to the County Council Chief Executive to ask for additional bins near to the Wave earth sculpture and also at the Fisherman’s car park near to the Country Park
- The forum was looking to work with Cetma to set up a grab and bag scheme.
- The idea of setting up a Food Fairies scheme was discussed, noting that good communication was needed beforehand.
- A number of local businesses had been approached on the topic of reducing single use plastics with some positive responses.
- The Meals on Wheels scheme would be using compostable food containers.
- They would be communicating with the organisation who were undertaking the sand dune stabilisation works in the Country Park to discuss it further.
- Water vole survey training would be going ahead via zoom with the date to be arranged.
- Discussed choosing a slogan to clarify the purpose of the resilience forum.

Members noted that the built environment aspect had not been dealt with yet, however the lead believed that it was a priority for some of their new members and the next meeting may see more work done.

Economy Forum

The forum lead was not in attendance and so the CDO updated members on its meeting, although she did not have notes and so was only able to inform that they had discussed an initiative to encourage people to buy local for Christmas.

Cohesive Forum

The forum would meet the following week.

Following a query, members discussed whether or not Forums could use the Council address for correspondence. It was noted that many organisations have a Council address and operated without difficulty. Members **AGREED** unanimously for forums to be allowed to use the Council address on their letterhead.

Following a query, members discussed the forums having a separate Facebook presence. It was noted that those that had a constitution were able to set up whatever online presence they wished. It was noted that a Councillor acting as an individual was able to do contribute to social media provided it was clear they were acting as such and not representing the Council.

Members discussed the ongoing monitoring of social media on behalf of the Forums and who would be responsible. Whether or not there should be one page per forum or a combined page was discussed, noting that there may be occasions in the future when the forums have different stances on a subject, which could lead to confusion. The CDO advised that some Forums with a lower membership may benefit from having greater visibility via a shared page. She added that at present with increased posting on the Council Facebook page, posts from the Forums on it ran the risk of being lost.

Members **AGREED** unanimously that the issue of social media presence was for the Forums to decide themselves.

ACTION: CDO

9. Update on community support

The CDO updated members on the items approved at the emergency meeting on 2nd October as follows:

- The Meals on Wheels deliveries had started today and had been well received and could be considered a success. The new Chef had helped things proceed smoothly. A number of additional orders had already been placed for the next week.
- The Halloween poster had been launched with over 140 registrations already. She had a team of volunteers ready to assist in delivery of the treat bags.
- Keep fit challenge competitors were beginning to complete with the first medal having been given out already.

Members discussed whether or not the remit of this Task & Finish group had ended. Some felt that as it was dealing with events rather than direct covid 19 response it should be ended, in case it became a permanent sub-committee by default. Others noted that it was community events that people had been lacking over the summer months which made it a covid 19 response as normal practices had not been possible. It was also noted that the group was tasked with covid 19 response and that the pandemic was very much still present and affecting the community, therefore its remit was still extant.

10. Consideration of Town of Culture 2021

The CDO stated that she had received confirmation from the County Council that Pembrey and Burry Port would be the Town of Culture 2021. Members **AGREED** for her to arrange for events using the planned events of 2020 as a template. A working group of 3 members was agreed with Cllrs Michael Theodoulou and Peter Freeman volunteering. Members were asked to contact the CDO if they wished to join the group

ACTION: CDO

11. Consideration of the Town Council Newsletter

Members had received a draft version of the newsletter in advance of the meeting. Members were reminded that the newsletter would be bilingual once the final text was agreed.

It was discussed as to whether to what quality of production members thought best but more information on eventual costs would be needed for a firm choice. A few minor changes had already been noted for incorporation into the next draft, including a greater focus on wider Council work, including a look to the future. There would also be information about what responsibilities the Council has to help the public understand what separated it from the county Council.

Discussion was had of the intended frequency of the newsletter, with quarterly and annual options looked at. The volume of work related to each was weighed against the need for up to date information. Members also noted that they had the ability to update the community via social media, the website and the noticeboards. It was noted that the marketing budget had been reduced as part of the budget revision exercise. Members suggested the CDO look at a newsletter produced ten years previous by the Council for an idea on layout and content.

Members **AGREED** to set up a working group to assist the CDO on the production of the next draft.

ACTION: CDO

Cllrs Peter Freeman, Moira Thomas and Mary Wenman volunteered to join the group.

Members requested that the CDO prepare a costing for the publication at different frequencies to help members in their decision.

ACTION: CDO

12. Consideration of Christmas planning

Members noted that there would be no Christmas festival or parade this year. There would however still be Christmas lighting. A decision was needed regarding when the switch-on would take place which could be held online but would not be promoted to avoid drawing a crowd.

The CDO advised that Llanelli was holding its switch on the week after Remembrance Sunday while Carmarthen was turning theirs on from October. The stored lights were due to be delivered soon and once arrived the contractor would be asked to install them soon after. Members requested she contact the contractor to establish a timeline.

ACTION: CDO

Following a discussion, members **AGREED** to put out the Santa's post box again and run the return letter scheme too.

ACTION: CDO

Following a suggestion from the CDO members **AGREED** to approve a Christmas float, whereby Sion Corn, The Mayor and Tedi Tywyn could be driven around Pembrey and Burry Port as a spectacle for families.

ACTION: CDO

13. Consideration of the possibility of a supermarket in the local area

Copies of the letter prepared by Cllr Les George had been distributed to members in advance of the meeting. Members noted that the County Council had a local development plan which included a supermarket development on a plot of land on the south of the railway line. There had been little

announced on progress regarding any of the developments and the letter requested the Town Council contact the County Council to find out what was happening.

Members discussed whether or not a large supermarket would be a beneficial development for the community, noting that although it created new jobs, it could also put pressure on existing businesses in the town. It was also noted that there was currently a plan for the Cooperative to redevelop a derelict site in the town to create a larger store, which may affect the appeal for a competitor supermarket to build a new store.

Members also discussed that there were a large number of developments which would increase the population of the town significantly but that supermarket companies were currently closing stores rather than opening new ones.

Members **AGREED** that a meeting with the County Council Regeneration team was needed to ask them for information on the status of the local development plan and harbour redevelopment master plan.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk

14. Consideration of democracy and digitalisation

The Clerk advised members that following their request to establish quotes for providing a live-streaming service for Council meetings, he had one for them to consider. The quote was from Starleaf which would charge £16,697 for a supported service. Members discussed whether or not it was a justifiable spend. It was noted that as the point at which meetings could be held in person and with a public audience was not known, it was difficult to assess the value.

It was noted that One Voice Wales was in discussions with the minister regarding funding of digitalisation, but that they were in the same difficulty as the minister could see the need for help but without a deadline the urgency was hard to establish.

Members **AGREED** to refer the matter for discussion at the next Town Council meeting due to the high cost of investment.

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk

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

Members discussed with concern the recent flash flooding of the A484 and risk to housing to the south of that road, opposite the Gwdig development, following heavy rain. It was noted that this issue had been raised by many in the community and that there had been a muted response from the County Council on the matter.

Members discussed what precautions the developer had put in place for such a situation with the large holding tanks noted, however a large amount of the water had simply been run off down the roads and tracks, and over the boundary wall and so would not have reached those tanks. It was noted that the County Council did send a water bowser to clear the gullies, after the flooding, to try and ensure the free flow of water in the storm drainage.

Members **AGREED** to refer the matter to the next Town Council meeting for a fuller discussion.

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk

Members noted that there were also local resident concerns regarding the impact of pile driving and noise pollution from the development which would also be discussed.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED** that the meeting move to in camera, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris. **RESOLVED** 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.

16. To consider the schedule of accounts

Members noted the schedule.

Meeting end 8.25pm