

Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council

Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee Meeting

Wednesday 9th September 2020

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

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

Absent: Councillor Rachel Evans

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

Via Microsoft Teams 10am to 12.25pm

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Richard Adler and Les George.

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

Cllr David Owens declared an interest in item 6 as a close relation was part of the organisation of one of the applicants.

3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee meetings held on Wednesday 19th August 2020

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes

Pg2 item 4 re: apprenticeships

Members heard that the interviews would be taking place on Friday for the horticultural apprenticeship. Members discussed the composition of the panel and agreed that it remain as consisting of Cllrs Robert John and David Owens in their roles as Chairs of Committees and members of this Committee. The CFS confirmed that there were four being interviewed for the apprenticeship.

5. Consideration of the Committee's budget monitoring report

The Clerk highlighted a few items for members attention.

- On income, the Community Resilience Grant had been received.
- On expenditure, 1 large item of £492 had been spent on Community Support
- £989 was also spent against the Community Events heading but some of this budget would be moved to the Community Support line in line with previous decisions.

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*Mike Theodoulou*¹

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- As the Community Resilience Grant was an unbudgeted item he advised members note that with that line taken out the total expenditure would have shown as 13.9%

6. Consideration of applications received for financial donations

There were two applications for consideration:

Marie Curie – £200

The CDO reminded members that the applicant had received the advice from the Council following their previous general request for additional funds, as instructed by this Committee. She advised that the application stated clearly that although a national organisation, the applied for funds would be allocated for local spending and included details of their activities in the area too. The submitted accounts were for the national organisation though however they had also included details on how that money was being allocated.

Members discussed the issue noting that the Council would normally support fundraising activities for this organisation instead but this was problematic under current circumstances. The possibility of organising a different kind of activity such as a cake sale with no “event” to attend was mooted as a means of raising the profile of the organisation too. Some members were concerned at granting funds to a national charity in case it set a precedent, although others felt it would not as each application is assessed individually and these were exceptional circumstances.

Cllr Bob Walpole **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman, for the grant to be awarded. In the ensuing vote 7 members voted in favour with 1 abstention and 1 against. It was **RESOLVED** to award the grant.

ACTION: CDO

Pembrey AFC - £1550

Cllr David Owens declared an interest and took no part in the following discussion.

The CDO outlined that the application would be to purchase a container to prevent theft of recently acquired equipment. The Clerk advised that the equipment had been purchased as part of Section 106 investment and the process had been administered by the Town Council. He also informed members that if granted this would leave around £3,500 in the budget for other applicants.

Members noted the extensive work the club did in the community in providing activities for young people in particular.

Cllr Lisa Mitchell **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John that the grant be awarded. Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour.

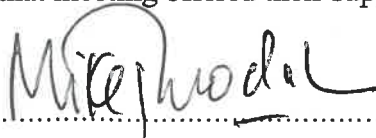
ACTION: CDO

7. Update on grants applied for/received

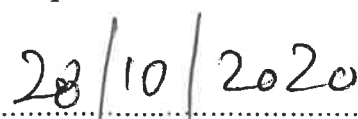
The CDO had prepared and distributed a report in advance of the meeting. There were details on the Coastal Communities Fund which the CDO was seeking permission from the Committee to submit an expression of interest to the fund for a project which could potentially provide additional jobs for the community as well as additional services. Details had been provided in the report and had been discussed by the Task and Finish Group on 8th September.

Those present at that meeting offered their support to submitting an expression of interest.

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Members discussed grants in general with calls made for members to be given a wider understanding of the grants available, although it was noted this was a potentially large task. All expressed their support for the work of the CDO to date.

Members requested that a schedule or document be provided to keep a track of all of the active grants the Council was involved in.

ACTION: CDO

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that the CDO be permitted to submit the expression of interest to the Coastal Communities Fund. **RESOLVED**

ACTION: CDO

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the CDO use the Council priorities (once agreed) as a guide for which areas of funding to seek. **RESOLVED**

ACTION: CDO

8. Update from community forums

Members noted that previously they had decided that the forums should try to reconvene physically if possible. The Clerk had received advice recently which made this now unlikely. Although the maximum allowed under the legislation by the Welsh Government was to allow a gathering of up to 30 individuals, the guidance from the County Council was that buildings should not be opened up for meetings, AGM's and a wide variety of other activities. It was also clear that if an event is to go ahead in the Halls of Council buildings then there is a duty of responsibility on this Council to ensure that the limits are not exceeded.

The CFS stated that the current risk assessment, which had been formed using the legislative guidance, allowed for a maximum of 28 to be in the Memorial Hall at the same time.

Members **AGREED** unanimously that no meetings should be held, as was outlined in legislature.

ACTION: Clerk

Members discussed continuing to arrange community forum meetings digitally. The CDO stated that on contacting each forum member only one third of them were able to meet via Teams, and this number included the Councillors. She stated that she would work with the IT consultant to try and make the process easier. She would also make use of the noticeboards to further promote them.

On community forum membership, the CDO suggested that she could use the recent report on the work of the forums to date as a publicity drive and to generate interest in increasing membership, with the caveat that meetings were via Teams at present. Members **AGREED** unanimously.

ACTION: CDO


Members **AGREED** unanimously that a video update from members of this Committee on their work with the forums should be made.

ACTION: CDO

9. Update on community support

Members heard that the Task and Finish Group had met the day previous and had discussed a number of items as follows:

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Successful Events

The Fruity Friday, bike check event and sandcastle competition had proven to be popular and successful, with updates from the events having going out via social media.

Cancelled Sports Day

The event had been cancelled in line with the previous decision, however medals for participants and winners had already been ordered. So as not to waste this resource, the group had suggested a similar event could be organised for the Easter holiday (2021) or for an online competition with set goals for youngsters, possibly over half term. The targets could be to complete a set amount of running or cycling within their household or bubble, and then be rewarded with a medal from the Council. The benefits to health and wellbeing of the community were highlighted.

The CDO confirmed she would ensure Cllr Peter Freeman was invited to future Task & Finish group meetings.

Following a discussion Cllr Lisa Mitchell **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris for an online fitness challenge to be established for young people during the half term week.

RESOLVED

ACTION: CDO

Meals on Wheels

The CDO confirmed that preparations were going well for the scheme to start from the 14th October. An earlier start date had been avoided so as to allow Meddygfa Tywyn Bach use of the Memorial Hall for their Flu Clinic. The Chairs of this Committee and Finance, Governance and Personnel had overseen the job description and details for the Cook position prior to it going out, and there had been two applicants so far. The kitchen was being registered with the Food Standards Agency and an inspection would follow shortly.

Farmers Market

This idea had been discussed previously with the intention to look at its feasibility in the next year. The group believed preference should be given for it to be held in Pembrey as it did not have any shops. If this plan is approved steps would be taken to ensure no clashes with other nearby farmers markets so that the sellers were able to attend.

The group recommended that these initial steps be approved, so a more informed decision could be taken at the October meeting which would hopefully allow the market to be set up before the end of December.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris, that the Committee agree in principal to the idea, with the task and finish group to assess the details with a strong preference for it to be held in Pembrey. **RESOLVED**

ACTION: CDO

Local Policing

It had been noted that residents in Pwll had access to a local policing forum, which was not something that was available to residents in Pembrey or Burry Port.

The Chair felt that this matter was not within the remit of the Task & Finish Group and should be expanded and put on the agenda for the next Regeneration and Community Engagement Meeting.

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk

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Teddy Tywyn

Following the success of the Teddy Tywyn character at the Teddy Bears Picnic the Group had looked at ways of expanding the role into an official mascot. Suggestions included litter picking or anti-littering campaigns.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to arrange to work with the Grab and Bag group on the litter picking exercise, including the offer to use Teddy Tywyn.

ACTION: CDO

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that a recommendation be made to the Town Council for Teddy Tywyn to be adopted as the official Town Council mascot.

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk

Newsletter

Members have discussed the need for a newsletter on several occasions previously. The content of this newsletter should focus on the Council's Covid response and work over the summer.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour of a draft newsletter being prepared by the CDO, with final content to be approved once ready and made available in English and Cymraeg, and for the distribution to be a shared responsibility of Councillors.

ACTION: CDO

The Group were continuing to look at the Pembrey and Burry Port is Kind campaign and Men's Shed's options but had no update to give on these.

10. Consideration of photographing staff at community events

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the work of staff at events should be highlighted through photography and made use of in post-event updates.

ACTION: CDO

11. Consideration of the process of the issue of press releases.

Following a discussion, members noted that the Council had only issued press releases in line with its current press and media policy which was agreed at the Annual Meeting. Members were asked to submit any changes they felt were needed in advance of next years policy setting.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that all agreed upon press releases be distributed to each Councillor prior to being made public, or as soon as possible afterwards in time constrained instances.

ACTION: Officers

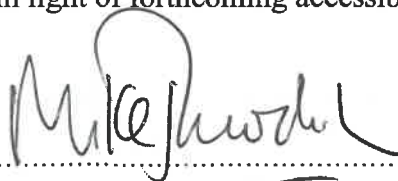
12. Consideration of the Town Council's website

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour of approving staff to undertake a review of the website content and make the necessary changes.

ACTION: Administrative Assistant

Members noted ongoing work to make the website available bilingually and an investigation of responsibilities in light of forthcoming accessibility legislation.

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13. Consideration of Christmas arrangements

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour of preparations for Christmas lighting to proceed as planned.

ACTION: CFS

Members discussed other arrangements usually put in place for Christmas including the parade and Christmas market. It was noted that local shops had expressed an interest in a temporary road closure of Station Rd so they could also form a part of the Christmas Market. Some urged caution about encouraging crowds to gather, while others felt it might help to minimise movement of people over the winter period. It was felt prudent to seek guidance from the County Council on the feasibility of the Christmas Market before making any arrangements.

Members heard that the CDO was meeting with the Future Generations Liaison Group at the end of the week, when Christmas preparations would be discussed, which may inform what was possible.

Members discussed a suggestion to site the Christmas tree on the Clwb Bach roundabout instead of adjacent to it. It was noted that no planting had taken place this year and the re positioning of the tree would be a good focal point for the town. The CFS had previously advised that there was an electricity supply on the roundabout that would need a usage agreement from the relevant authority. Concerns about road safety were also discussed.

The CDO reported that a local resident had approached the Council asking if a tree could be placed on the corner of Elkington Rd and Stepney Rd.

Members discussed the matter with many having concerns about visibility at that junction.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED** seconded by Cllr Karen Morris, for the Christmas tree to be sited on the roundabout next to Clwb Bach for this year. In the ensuing vote 8 members voted in favour with 1 abstention and 1 against. It was therefore **RESOLVED** in favour of the proposal.

ACTION: CDO

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman that the Committee did not support the placement of a tree at the junction of Elkington Rd and Stepney Rd. **RESOLVED**

14. Consideration of the provision of toilets at the harbour

Members heard a report from the Clerk on a recent meeting with Officers from the County Council, staff and members of the Chairs Committee. An open discussion took place to explore the possible solutions to toilet provision at the harbour and other place-based services.

The limitations to service delivery faced by the County regarding grass-cutting and bin emptying were discussed, with information on the technology driven solution the County Council was using to tackle the problem. An increase in the frequency of these services was not possible unless the Town Council was prepared to meet the costs and arrange the work itself.

Delays to restoration works to the harbour wall were due to necessary paperwork related to it being a scheduled monument, but work was expected to start before the end of September. The Marine Group had also reported that their new dredger would start working before the end of the month also.

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A result of the meeting was that a public statement was being prepared that would be issued jointly with Peter Hughes Griffiths, outlining the steps being taken to tackle the problem. Members noted that this meeting had established a new means of officer to officer communications that would provide for smoother cooperation in future works.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas that the meeting be allowed to continue past the two hour mark. **RESOLVED**

Members noted the success of the temporary toilet provision for the harbour that the Council had paid for. A discussion was held as to whether or not it should continue, and if so with how many toilets.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Lisa Mitchell that one toilet be kept in place until the end of December, provided that the funding can be identified by the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee. **RESOLVED**

ACTION: CFS

15. Consideration of place based services

All matters related to this subject had been discussed during the previous item.

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

Members discussed whether or not meetings should return to evenings to allow those who worked to attend more easily. It was noted that the Chairs Committee had already agreed to change to evening meetings, but it was up to each Committee to decide.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously in favour of holding the meetings on an alternating schedule of day time and evening meetings.

ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk


Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED** that the meeting move to in camera, seconded by Cllr Moira Thomas. **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.

17. To consider the schedule of accounts

Noted.

Meeting ended 12.25pm

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