

**Pembrey and Burry Port Town Council**

**Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**Dydd Mercher 13<sup>eg</sup> Ionawr 2021**

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

**Present: Councillors Michael Theodoulou (Chair), Peter Freeman, Robert John, Karen Morris, David Owens (arr. 10.45am), Moira Thomas, Bob Walpole and Mary Wenman.**

**Absent: Councillors Rachel Evans**

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

**Via Microsoft Teams 10.35am to 12.46pm**

**1. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Les George, Lisa Mitchell and Karen Trimble.

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

None were made.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Engagement Committee meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Members requested a correction for accuracy.

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris, that provided the correction was made the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. **RESOLVED**.

**4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes**

Pg3 item 15 re COVID 19 strategy

Members noted that the item had been deferred until this meeting or when the Clerk/RFO had produced his update on staff requirements. Members agreed to discuss this matter further under the last item of the public meeting agenda.

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

Cllr David Owens arrived 10.45am.

A copy of the report had been distributed to members in advance of the meeting. The Clerk/RFO highlighted that a number of the costs that had been collected in the Events budget had now been appropriately transferred to the Community Support budget.

The budget was at 51% of its target and so was under budget for what was expected by this time of year.

He confirmed that this report covered up to the end of November and that some of the grant money would not appear on the report until the next meeting.

Cllr Bob Walpole **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John for the report to be accepted.  
**RESOLVED.**

Members agreed to discuss the issues raised recently at other Committee meetings concerning the budget for 21/22.

The Clerk/RFO stated that each other Committee had reviewed their initial budget following the suggestion from the Finance, Governance and Personnel Committee for the Council to aim to limit the precept increase. It was noted that the Facilities and Assets Committee had felt this could not be achieved without a reduction of services, although it had made additional adjustments to bring the precept as low as they could manage. In light of this the Clerk/RFO had produced some revised budgetary documents, with the challenge before this Committee to assess where further adjustments could be made to bring that precept increase as low as they could, without reducing services.

The Clerk/RFO highlighted a number of areas for consideration as follows:

Flowers budget

Members were asked to consider if any reduction could be made to this budget.

It was noted that they played a significant role in the mental wellbeing for the community and so a complete removal was out of the question. It was also noted that the Council had recently appointed an apprentice to work on planting with the establishment of a polytunnel. If there was no budget for flowers they may be hampered in their work.

Members discussed several different approaches that could be taken to ensure some floral displays were made without significant costs. It was noted that a preference for perennial planting would see good returns as spending on planting should reduce every year as a result.

Members discussed what would be an appropriate amount. It was noted that there was not sufficient time to request the Cemetery and Facilities Superintendent to enquire about prices.

Cllr Bob Walpole **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the budget be adjusted to £5000.

Cllr Robert John proposed an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Cllr Peter Freeman for the budget to be adjusted to £2,500.

Members voted on the amendment first as follows. 2 in favour, 6 against and 0 abstentions.

Members then voted on the original proposal as follows: 6 in favour, 0 against and 2 abstentions.  
The original proposal was therefore **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

Income

The Clerk/RFO advised that no income had been budgeted for, which if done would help to offset the increases.

The CDO advised that her initial estimates had included a £5000-£6000 income as a few of the events should generate an income.

Members noted that although there was an expense associated with arranging events, any income they generated would offset the expenses. Further if the events could not proceed due to restrictions due to COVID 19, then they would not incur an expense either. Following this information members discussed reducing the expenditure while setting a certain amount for income to create a net gain effect. It was felt this would be preferable to a reduction alone without setting an income budget.

Members discussed the Council's obligations in relation to being the Town of Culture for 2021 in relation to this decision.

Cllr David Owens **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that the budget be reduced to £8000 and that an income budget be set at £2000. **RESOLVED**.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

#### Community grant

Members noted that they increased this budget and discussed whether this was a suitable amount given the other grant pots they had available. The CDO stated that due to the restrictions on face to face meetings, clubs, societies and organisations were not applying for the grants at present.

Members discussed whether the grant scheme could be offset by any unclaimed allowances from members, which the Clerk/RFO confirmed was feasible through virement. Members noted that any decision not to claim their allowance was an individual choice and there was no expectation for them to forgo the payment so as to increase the grant pot.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman that the budget be reduced by £3,900.

Cllr Moira Thomas proposed an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Cllr David Owens that the budget be reduced to £5000.

Members voted unanimously in favour of the amendment and it was **RESOLVED**.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

#### Bowls Club

Members noted that although the Bowls Facility was a matter for the Facilities and Assets Committee, the ongoing management and use of it did fall within the remit of this Committee.

Members discussed the current difficulties in the working relationship between the Council and the Club following the Club's breach of lockdown restrictions and subsequent failure to meet with the Council to discuss it. The discussion was far reaching, concerning the number of people who directly benefitted from the Council's continued investment in the facility and the obligations the Council took on when the asset was transferred from the County Council.

It was noted that the initial agreement with the club had been based on the Council receiving the Club fees to offset its running costs of the facility, however their membership had reduced significantly following internal club actions and had shown no signs of increasing prior to 2021. It was noted that no significant effort had been made by the Council to promote the facility or the club.

It was noted that any changes would likely result in an increase to spending in the short term, rather than a reduction and so members **AGREED** not to recommend any changes to this budget.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

Members also noted the need to agree a future plan with the Club regarding the facility.

The Clerk/RFO confirmed that using the above information he could produce an updated draft document for members to consider at the Town Council Meeting.

Members requested that the Chairs and Vice Chairs have sight of this when it was ready.

**6. Consideration of applications received for financial donations**

None had been received.

CDO – none come in since agenda gone out.

**7. Update on grants applied for/received**

The CDO reported that all existing grants were within budget and proceeding according to plan. She had applied to Western Power for and been awarded an additional £750 to go towards the costs of the Senior Citizens Christmas lunch and the Christmas Hampers, which meant that there had been no cost to the Council to deliver those services.

The CDO had also been successful in applying to the Capital Fund for money to purchase a chest freezer and kitchen appliances which would allow the Meals on Wheels team to make more food fresh and so reduce costs going forward.

An update had been received regarding the large grant fund from the Welsh Government, in that the Council had not been successful with its application. The CDO confirmed that she was looking for funding for the individual proposals within that larger one and would update if she was successful with any of them.

The CDO informed members that she was seeking funding for loft insulation for Pembrey Memorial Hall also.

**8. Update from community forums**

The CDO updated members that the resilience forum had not met in December but would be meeting again, while the Joint Forum would be meeting next week. She had sent out reports from the other forums earlier in the day.

She reported that a recent drive to re-establish contact with lapsed members and to seek new members had been fruitful, and that each forum had ideas to work on for moving forward.

In response to a query, she confirmed that there was a regular schedule for the forum meetings now and gave members the necessary information.

**9. Update on community support**

The CDO report mostly focussed on the support provided over the Christmas period where only 1 event had been prevented from taking place due to restrictions. The remainder had gone well and had been positively received.

The digital events for the Town of Culture had started too.

Meals on Wheels had expanded to two days a week and was continuing to be well received.

The Food Forward project had started in Pembrey and Burry Port yesterday with a launch event. The CDO stated that there was already a positive response from the community on this item.

Cllrs Michael Theodoulou and Peter Freeman declared an interest at this point as CBSA were responsible for delivering this project the Council was taking part in.

Members thanked the CDO for all of her work.

**10. Consideration of Town Council website**

Members noted the information received from the CDO and were **AGREED** that officers should continue to lead on the issue and bring a final version for consideration by the Committee.

**ACTION: CDO/Deputy Clerk**

Members noted that there had been an indication that the County Council may be prepared to cover the costs of the Town wi-fi for 2 years. The CDO stated that she was not aware of any clauses which tied the Council to continued use after that period but the details had not yet been received.

**11. Consideration of location of planted Christmas trees (referral from Regeneration and Community Engagement 09/12/20)**

Members noted the location maps sent to them with options for locations.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou declared an interest as a number of the locations were near to his residence.

Members discussed each option for Burry Port first and were **AGREED** that they would like information about the possibility of using the current location of the cut tree adjacent to the Clwb Bach Roundabout.

**ACTION: CDO/CFS**

Cllrs David Owens, Robert John and Peter Freeman declared an interest due to their membership of Clwb Bach.

Following a discussion of location options at Pembrey, members were unanimously **AGREED** that none of the options were immediately suitable.

Cllr Mary Wenman **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Bob Walpole that a cut tree continue to be placed in the middle of Randall Square and for a planted tree in Burry Port with its location yet to be confirmed. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: CDO**

**12. Update on Town of Culture 2021 programme**

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John that in light of the budget reduction, the CDO produce a review of the event plans for the Town of Culture and highlight the areas for change. **RESOLVED**

**ACTION: CDO**

**13. Consideration of volunteer policy**

Members had received copies of the policy in advance of the meeting. The CDO confirmed that safety checking mechanisms were accounted for within the appropriate budgets.

Cllr Karen Morris **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman that the Committee recommend to the Council for the policy to be adopted. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

**14. To consider any referred matters (if any).**

Regarding the COVID 19 strategy document. Members noted its importance and need for discussion.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Mary Wenman that the item be considered at the next meeting. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Deputy Town Clerk**

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

Members noted a request from a local cockle and mussel picker for support following a dispute between them and the County Council. It was noted that this would be a matter for the County Councillors and the fisheries authorities.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John that a letter be sent to the County Councillors for Pembrey and Burry Port and to the relevant fisheries authority to seek a resolution.

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

Cllr Robert John **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the meeting proceed beyond 2 hours. **RESOLVED.**

Members noted the referral from the Facilities and Assets Committee regarding the provision of lighting at Burry Port Harbour. Members heard that this matter did not fall within the remit of said Committee as the building any lights would be installed on is not a Council asset and as such this was a matter for this Committee.

The request was to assist with lighting at the harbour following safety concerns caused by a lack of lighting at present. The owner share responsibility for the electricity. Members noted that the County Council and Police had obligations under sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to address this problem.

Members noted that the initial system put forward by the CFS following a request from a member was substantive and would likely prove a financial burden to the owner. Members noted that

whatever light system they agreed a health and safety check would be undertaken by the CFS and the insurance company informed.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Robert John that the Committee vire the appropriate amount to purchase 3 lights for installation and to write to the County Council and the Police to remind them of their legal obligations. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

Members noted that there was further flooding of the A484 from the Gwdig site at this time.

Cllr Robert John declared an interest as he lived opposite the development.

Cllr Michael Theodoulou **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr David Owens that a letter be sent to the County Councillors for Burry Port ward and the County Council to address the issue. **RESOLVED.**

**ACTION: Clerk/RFO**

Cllr Moira Thomas **PROPOSED**, seconded by Cllr Karen Morris that the meeting should proceed in camera.

*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 report.

Meeting end 12.46pm