

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday 11th June 2012, at Ynysmeudwy Hall commencing at 6.45pm

8885. Present Councillor B Williams (presiding), G Davies, D Harris, D B Thomas, M James, Mrs E Puzey, V Hotton, H Pickrell, Mrs J Bowen, L Purcell, Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson, H Evans, M Thomas.

Apologies: Councillor P Williams

8886. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interest: Councillor L Purcell declared an interest in the Planning discussion and left the room for the duration of the meeting. Councillor James declared an interest in planning application P2012/0489 as he had prior knowledge of the application and the Mayor Councillor B Williams expressed an interest in the Arena Project. Councillor D B Thomas chaired the meeting during the discussion on the Finance Committee recommendations as Councillor Williams took no part in this discussion.

8887. Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting and Annual General Meeting held on the 14th May 2012:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 14th May 2012, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council. Council also agreed that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting also held on the 14th May 2012 were a true record and were also agreed by Council.

8888. Matters raised by Members of the Public: PCSO Mark Jones addressed Council on behalf of the children at the Pontardawe and District Youth Club. He explained that following the creation of the Youth Club, the instances of anti social behaviour in Pontardawe had reduced by a massive 43%, however, recently there had been a resurgence in the form of Youths on BMX cycles and skateboards on 'The Cross' and in the retail park. Mark explained that a dedicated area was required for these youths to ride safely and requested that Council look into the provision of a 'Skate and BMX' park.

Resolved to be noted.

8889. Co – Option of the one seat in the Trebanos Ward: Two of the three candidates addressed Council. Mrs E Ranft and Mr S Hayes.

The Candidates were Mrs E Ranft, Mr S Hayes and Councillor R Lewis.

Both the candidates who addressed Council confirmed that they had read the criteria for becoming a Councillor and confirmed that they were eligible.

Vote 1

Mrs E Ranft 4 votes

Mr S Hayes 4 votes

Councillor R Lewis 6 votes

There was no majority and therefore a second vote was carried out between Mrs E Ranft and Mr S Hayes to determine who would be removed from the final vote.

Vote 2

Mrs E Ranft 8 votes

Mrs S Hayes 6 votes

As Mrs E Ranft had the majority the final vote was carried out between Councillor R Lewis and Mrs E Ranft

Vote 3

Mrs E Ranft 7 votes

Councillor R Lewis 7 votes

As there was no clear majority it was agreed that guidance would be requested from the Elections Office at Neath Port Talbot Council

Resolved that the Clerk would request guidance from the Neath Port Talbot Elections Office.

8890. Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm Traffic: Council was advised of various details on the route for the turbines together with the remedial work to be carried out to the roads around Pontardawe, from a meeting held at Neath Port Talbot Council on the 23rd May 2012. They were further advised that the haulier had been appointed and that alterations were already in process to the road system in Pontardawe prior to the 'Dummy Run'. It was believed that the 'dummy run' was to take place in the first week of July, however, there had been no confirmation of this. The 'Traffic Management Plan' was due to be issue once the 'dummy run' had been completed.

A number of issues were raised:

- In previous meetings with Neath Port Talbot Council it had been stated that the 'dummy run' could take place without any remedial work being carried out to the road system as the transporters could be collapsed in order to negotiate some areas, with parts of the route being reviewed by computer simulation.
- The remedial work on Ynysderw Roundabout had resulted in the central island being removed and firm fixings being removed from crash barriers. Pedestrians were therefore forced to stand in the road while crossing. The crash barriers without fixings were also now ineffective as a security measure to protect pedestrians.
- That the timings for the turbines to reach Pontardawe seemed far too short
- That there was no alternative route for Emergency vehicles once the convoy was within Pontardawe.
- That the convoy could not be stopped regardless once it had began its journey.

Resolved that the Clerk will contact Neath Port Talbot Council to request the issues stated are commented upon and also to express the Members disgust that the Town Council was not officially kept informed of developments, but was relying on information from third parties. That the Clerk will forward a separate letter requesting that we are given prior notice of the date of the 'dummy run'.

8891. Police Matters:

Trebanos PACT: The next PACT meeting is to be held on the 28th June 2012 at Trebanos Community Centre, to commence at 6.30pm, the PACT priorities remain the same as for May.

Pontardawe PACT: The next PACT meeting is to be held on the 28th June 2012 at the Cross Community Centre, to commence at 6.30pm, the PACT priorities remain the same as for May.

Council Members also stated that they were concerned at the lack of Police presence in the area on weekend nights as there had been recent instances of violence in Pontardawe at this time.

Resolved that the Clerk will contact the Chief Constable with Councils concerns
There was also a mandate agreed for this issue to be discussed on behalf of Council by Councillor Linet Purcell and Mike James in their forthcoming meeting with Chief Superintendent Mark Mathias.

8892. CoRe Funding: The Clerk confirmed that an application for CoRE funding had been made to 'Groundworks' and that the Clerk was also pursuing additional funding for improvements to the equipment at Trebanos Park.

Resolved that the Clerk will continue to pursue this grant other funding opportunities.

8893. Awel Aman Tawe – Pontardawe Hydro Potential: Council were informed that the two areas currently being reviewed were the both in Cwmdu Glen. The Land Registry stated that they had no details of the land owners on the second site and therefore it was unlikely that this area could go forward. With the initial site on the left hand side of the riverbank however it was believed that the whole of this area was owned by Neath Port Talbot Council and that despite the designated Ancient Woodland and the forthcoming designation of a Nature Reserve, there may still be opportunities for this site.

Resolved that the Clerk will advise Council on developments.

8894. Planning:

Councillor Mrs L Purcell and M James expressed an interest.

P2012/0450

Applicants name – Mr Adrian Warner, 11 Brecon Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4PA.

Site Location – 11 Brecon Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4PA

Proposed Development – Part two storey part single story rear extension.

Resolved no objection provided there is Neighbourhood notification.

P2012/0489

Applicants name – Mrs Joanna Clapham, 'A Cut Above' 77 Herbert Street, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4ED.

Site Location – 26 Herbert Street, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4EB.

Proposed Development – Proposed change of use from Laundrette (sui generis) to hair and beauty salon (sui generis)

Resolved No Objection.

8895. Policy and Resources Committee held on the 29th May 2012:

This Committee to discuss the Model Complaints Policy

The Clerk had confirmed that the policy wording was drafted by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales, and was in natural language in an attempt to make it more accessible to the general public. It was however felt by the Committee that the Policy should be in more structured language.

The Committee recommended that the Model Complaints Policy (in structured language) be agreed and adopted.

The Committee looked at the results of the investigations into possible cost saving measures.

- Trade accounts in conjunction with the other local Town/Community Councils to take advantage of the buying power under shared services – The Clerk confirmed that she had looked into group purchasing agreements but had determined that the value of sales to Town and Community Councils were insufficient to provide any cost savings
- Miniature Christmas Trees – The Clerk confirmed that she was yet to investigate costs for this project.
- A supply of second class and First Class stamps had been purchased.
- The Clerk confirmed that a pilot of emailing notices had taken place prior to the election but had resulted in a meeting that was not quorate. She did however confirm

that Members had now been reminded to regularly review their emails and that future notices and information would be emailed.

- The Councils web-site now had copies of English minutes and agendas –The web site also stated that a Welsh translation would be provided on application.
- The Clerk confirmed that she had looked into the possibility of sub letting the office but that as sub let was not included in the current lease, there would need to be an alteration in the lease which would trigger a rent review. It was therefore decided that to sub let of the office was not feasible on financial or practical grounds. One alternative was to utilise the second hall at Ynysmeudwy as an office, but it was felt that this removal of the Clerk from the centre of the Town would be a retrospective move.
- The Clerk confirmed that the new Councillors had been advised of 'New Councillor Training' with 'One Voice Wales'
- The Clerk confirmed that a professional Energy Performance investigation had been carried out at Trebanos Hall, and that Radiant heating was suggested as an alternative heating method
- The Committee felt that there was little benefit to reviewing the demographics of the hall users as the Community Halls were considered hubs within the communities regardless.
- The Clerk confirmed that the utility suppliers had been reviewed in 2011 and were found to be competitive.

The Committee recommended the following:

1. That the cost of miniature Christmas trees is determined
2. That radiant heating is investigated for Trebanos Hall.

Resolved that the Committees recommendations be ratified.

8896. Finance Committee held on the 29th May 2012:

This Committee to discuss the Internal Auditors Report:

The Report was reviewed in full and the recommendations discussed.

The recommendations were as follows:

- All exceptions to financial regulations are reported separately to Council for approval.
- The Clerk should report regularly to Council on the potential Financial Commitment to the Youth Facility and report specifically on any support payments made.
- The Clerk should report to Council on the financial progress of the Cefn Llan Park project and advise of any risks associated with the project.

The Committee recommended that the Internal Auditors Report was accepted and the recommendations acted upon.

This Committee also to discuss the remaining grant applications:

Councillor Bob Williams expressed an interest in the Arena Project and therefore took no part in the discussion relating to this organisation. Councillor D B Thomas presided over this portion of the meeting.

Pontardawe Art Centre – The Clerk confirmed that the original request for grant funding of £2000 for publicity of the 'No Fit State' Circus had been rejected by Council however it was agreed that Council fully supported the Art Centre and its work with both the Chamber of Commerce and in providing Artistic and Cultural events within the area. It was therefore

agreed that a grant of £500 should be provided in order to show the Town Councils appreciation of the Art Centres place within the community. **(LGA 1972 S145)**

Riverside Project - The Riverside project had requested a grant of £400 in order to fund signage from the Glanrhyd Industrial Estate Roundabout to the Riverside facility, which the Committee felt was an effective use of funds in order to promote this facility. **(LGA 1972 S137)**

Neath Port Talbot Shopmobility: A request was received for grant funding for this organisation however the Committee felt that as this organisation operated in Neath, the residents of Pontardawe would not benefit sufficiently from the grant.

Neath Port Talbot Credit Union: A request was made for grant funding to publicise a credit union event in May 2012 in Pontardawe, however although the Committee recognised the benefit of the organisation, they felt that the request needed to be received earlier in the year as there was insufficient time between the request for grant income and the event for the Council to review the position thoroughly.

Pontardawe Chamber of Commerce: The Chamber of Commerce requested that a grant be provided of £3000 in order to support the 'Road Train' and provision of entertainment during the 'Summerfest'. The Committee reviewed the request and felt that as the budget for grant funding would be virtually utilised by a £3000 grant. It would be prudent to retain some grant income for later in the year. It was therefore suggested that in accordance with the decision made in 2011, a grant of £2500 be awarded, but that an opportunity would be provided later in the year in to request additional funding, if this was still available. **(LGA 1972 S145)**

The grants given are in the interest of, and will bring direct benefit to, this area or any part of it, or all, or some of its inhabitants.

The Committee recommended that grants were awarded as follows; Pontardawe Art Centre - £500, Riverside Project £400, Pontardawe Chamber of Commerce £2500.

Resolved that the Committees recommendations be ratified and also that the Clerk will invite a representative of the Arena Project and the Credit Union to a meeting to advise Council of the work carried out by them.

8897. Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2012: The Clerk provided all Members with copies of the Annual Return.

Resolved that the Return be agreed by Council and signed by the Chair.

8898. Cefn Llan Park: The Clerk confirmed that the contractors were due to begin on site on the 11th June. She also requested that Members consider a name for the Park. Members requested that Rhyd Y Fro Primary School and Pontardawe Welsh School be approached with a competition to determine ideas for the Parks name. Councillor M James offered a £50 prize for the competition.

Resolved that the Clerk will arrange a competition for the schools and that the Park be named in accordance with the winning entry, it is suitable.

8899. Accounts Schedule 278 totalling £8761.20.

Resolved to be agreed under financial regulations.

8900. Financial Support for Pontardawe and District Youth Facility: Council was advised that a payment had been made to the youth facility of £700 on the 10th May 2012.

Resolved to be noted.

8901. Letter received from the Minister of Transport re Local Bus Services:

The Letter stated that the Welsh Government had not implemented any reduction in funding for bus services in Wales but had instead offered bus operators a moratorium on Bus Service Operators grant for six months in return for their commitment to work with the Government to find a more affordable and targeted way to support the services in the future.

The letter confirmed that a funding review was in progress and changes would be introduced from April 2013.

The letter also stated of plans for an integrated ticket that could be used on both buses and trains and that they were also working with the Department of Transport on encouraging operators to put in place multi operational ticketing systems.

Resolved that the Clerk will enquire about the £3 million transport grant that has been removed and also request how these funds are now being utilised. Council Members also wished to bring to the Welsh Assembly Governments attention the plight of rural areas where there was a need for transport but not large numbers of individuals utilising the services.

8902. Email received re political material and advertising in community halls:

An email was received requesting that regulations be introduced to prevent political material being advertised in Community Halls.

It was requested that political material should be limited to:

- Contact Details
- Surgery diary or notification
- Other methods of disseminating similar information.

It was also requested that this information is restricted to notice boards.

Resolved that the regulations be agreed and the Hall Committees advised.

8903. Congratulations to Menna Jones: Council was advised that Menna Jones who had organised the Crochet class at Trebanos Hall had featured on an S4C news item in May due to the number of years she had been providing this class at the hall.

Resolved to be noted.

8904. Consultation on Sustainable Development: Members received the documents prior to the meeting as were asked to comment.

Resolved to be noted.

8905. Neath Port Talbot Local Services Board: Members received the documents prior to the meeting and were asked to comment.

Resolved to be noted.

8906. Consultation on the Promoting of Local Democracy in Wales: Members received the documents prior to the meeting and were asked to comment.

Resolved to be noted.

8907. Boundary Commission – Initial Proposals: Members received the documents prior to the meeting and were asked to comment.

Resolved to be noted.

8908. Rat infestation at the Canal/ Retail Park: An email was received concerning the rat infestation adjacent to the Canal and Retail Park.

Resolved that Neath Port Talbot are requested to put an additional litter bin on the path adjacent to the retail park and that they are also requested to look into reducing the rodent population in this area due to its proximity to food outlets.

8909. Urgent Road Safety Matters:

- Council was advised that the bus shelter had been removed from adjacent to the Jubilee, but was to be replaced.
- Members were concerned that although bus timetables of First Cymru were available, there were no time tables available for other carriers.

Resolved that the Clerk would contact the Public Services Operators Centre to obtain.

8910. Date of the next meeting: The date of the next meeting is due to be held at 6.45pm on the 9th July 2012 at ARCH Hall.

Signed

Dated.....