

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on the 14th March 2016 at Trebanos Hall, Swansea Road, Trebanos, commencing at 6.45pm.

10137. Present: Councillor D B Thomas (presiding), Mrs J Bowen, G Davies, D Harris, Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson, B Williams, Mrs L Purcell, Mrs E Puzey, V Hotten, Ms C Ford and H Pickrell

Youth Representatives: Harri Evans-Mason.

Apologies: Councillor Mrs R Phillips (Currently on Maternity Leave), H Evans and P Williams.

10138. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary interests: Councillors Mrs J Bowen, A Nicholson, Ms S Northcott, V Hotten and G Davies expressed an interest in the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility as they are Trustees. Councillor Ms S Northcott and A Nicholson expressed an interest in Cwmdru.

10139. Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 8th February 2016:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 8th February 2016, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council, with the following amendment:

Councillor Pickrell did attend the meeting on the 8th February 2016 but was not shown as present.

10140. Bilingual Meeting: Council was advised that unfortunately the translator had been unable to attend the meeting.

Resolved that a bilingual meeting would be arranged for a later date, when a translator could be in attendance.

10141. Matters raised by Members of the Public: None.

Resolved to be noted.

10142. Police Matters:

The following information was provided:

Trebanos – The next PACT meeting was due to be held on the 28th April 2016 at Trebanos Hall commencing at 6.30 pm.

The PACT priority remained preventing anti social behaviour at the Park.

The statistics showed only one crime for December 2015

Pontardawe – The next PACT meeting was due to be held on the 14th April 2016 at Pontardawe Art Centre commencing at 6.30pm

The PACT priorities remained anti social behaviour together with parking on the pavements in the Town Centre and speeding at Rhyd y fro.

The statistics showed 44 crimes for January 2016.

Debby confirmed that the Art Centre had been contacted to determine if an alternative room could be identified for PACT meetings during performances as the bar area had been very loud during the December 2015 meeting but that unfortunately no alternative room was available.

Council was advised that there were still issues with the 101 number however Sergeant James had secured funding to pilot an initiative in Pontardawe to tackle anti social behaviour and underage drinking. The initiative had been very successful in English Towns but will be only the second project of that type in Wales.

Council was very pleased with Sergeant James success and was fully behind the project. They also wished to know how the Town Council could assist the Police with the venture.

Resolved that Sergeant James will be asked to attend a future meeting in order to advise Council of the new project and how the Town Council could assist. Council also wishes PCSO Sian Jenkins contacted to determine if there is an alternative venue for PACT meetings if performances are in progress at the Art Centre.,

10143. Pontardawe and District Youth Facility: Councillors A Nicholson, Ms S Northcott, Mrs J Bowen, V Hotten and G Davies expressed an interest.

Council was advised that no additional funds had been transferred to the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility since the last meeting. They were also advised of the new time line for closure. The building would be handed back at the end of March but the actual Charitable company would not be closed until the end of the accounting period at the end of June.

Council confirmed that they were happy to support the closure of the facility financially until the end of June 2016.

The Youth Club was now running from Ynysmeudwy Hall on Friday evenings and Mark Jones had requested that lights be placed on the outside of the building to provide illumination in the Park. He explained that the Youth Club would be happy to support the cost of the installation.

Resolved that lights would be placed on the exterior of Ynysmeudwy Hall to illuminate the Park area.

10144. Pelican/ Zebra Crossing: Council was advised that a new Service Level Agreement and costing had been requested from the County Borough to support a crossing patrol warden at Swansea Road. The costs were substantially less than the original estimate at approximately £4500 pa.

Resolved that the Clerk will arrange a meeting with the Headteacher at Cwmtawe School to determine if any financial assistance from the school could be arranged. She was also given plenary powers to agree the SLA with the County Borough if some additional funds were made available by Cwmtawe School.

10145. Cwmddu: Councillor Mrs S Northcott and A Nicholson expressed an interest.

- The Clerk responded to the Member of the Publics questions from the last meeting. Most of the issues raised had been reported to Council at previous meetings however she had arranged for the County Borough to review the builder's material adjacent to the Glen.

Neath Port Talbot Council had spoken to the builder and the land owner and had been assured that the material would be used on projects and was not waste. They had also assured the County Borough that no material would find its way into Cwmdu. As the land itself was private land, no further action could be taken

- Neath Port Talbot Council closed the path from the Cross temporarily to remove the large trees that had fallen during storms early in the year and which obstructed the path.
- The Permissive path from Waun Gron to the Green Bridge was still closed however Engineers from the County Borough were to review the path from the Waterfall to the green bridge to determine if the path could be reinstated and if so then the approximate costs.
- No boundary report was available yet.
- The Clerk received correspondence from the Owners of the property 'Gwynfa' who's land is adjacent to the Town Council's at Cwmdu as they felt that some of their actions had not been fully explained to Council.

They wished the following information to be relayed to Council:

They had experienced significant difficulties with Neath Port Talbot Council during the building of the steps and path at James Street and were therefore weary of Council's in general. They did however wish to state that they were extremely supportive of Cwmdu Glen and had never intentionally taken any action that was not in the interest of the area. They also stated they would not take any action on land that was not theirs.

They stated that in accordance with correspondence from the solicitors they believed that all land adjacent to the path on the right hand side of the path from the James Street entrance was theirs and therefore the three trees just outside the fence were their responsibility. They stated that the fence had been placed behind the trees merely due to the instability of the land following the creation of the new steps and path from James Street. They stated that they were fully aware that the land on the opposite side of the path was owned by the Council and that any lopping on the opposite side of the path had not been carried out by them.

They also explained that they had contacted Neath Port Talbot Council prior to any work being carried out to confirm that there were no preservation orders on any of the trees and as they had been advised by the Council that the trees were not covered, they were under the impression that all authorities had been correctly sought and received.

With regard to the tree waste they provided details of the original plan from the County Borough which stated 'Note – cut trees to be kept on site and where possible used in the construction of the path' – They explained that rightly or wrongly they believed that the Council were happy for cut trees to remain in the glen to disintegrate naturally and indeed many cut trees were left by the County Borough in the Glen. As to the cut branches from the fern tree that were also adjacent to the path but were not indigenous to the area, they explained that they were not tree experts and therefore were not aware that some wood was not suitable to be left on site.

It was stated that all actions had been carried out in good faith and that they had no wish to take any action that was not in the Glens best interest or on land that was not theirs.

The Clerk explained that the Town Council was in the process of reviewing boundaries following the registration of the land and that once that process was complete the Town Council could discuss specific trees and boundaries to clear up any grey areas with them. It was always the Town Councils wish to work with its neighbours in order to get the best outcome for all parties. Council was also asked if details of the biodiversity plan could be provided for them to understand those plants and trees that were indigenous to the area and those that were not so that they had a better understanding of the ecology of the area.

Resolved that the Town Council will be kept up to date with developments.

10146. Community Halls:

Trebanos Hall – The heating system had been replaced and we were in the process of addressing any issues. As the pipes had been lagged by the installers, there was no need to box in the pipes.

ARCH Hall & Ynysmeudwy Hall – MPN windows were in the process of identifying the most effective time to replace the sealed windows.

Resolved that Council will be kept informed of developments.

10147. Bank Accounts: Council was advised that the placement of funds over £75000 in a Lloyds Bank account in the short term until details of the Credit Union were available was not possible (the setting up of the account was likely to be very time consuming). An alternative arrangement was required.

Resolved that the matter would be discussed in the forthcoming Finance Committee.

10148. Pwllfawatkin meeting: The Clerk confirmed that the County Borough had provided details of the planning requirements but that they had not confirmed if traffic lights would be placed on the main road during the construction.

Resolved that Councillor Purcell will look into the matter.

10149. Disabled parking at Pontardawe Post Office: Council was advised that there had originally been some confusion between parking at the old Post Office and the new Post Office at Pontardawe. However it had now been confirmed that no disabled parking bay would be created outside the new post office as this would limit the parking for others and disabled badge holders were able to park on double yellow lines.

Resolved to be noted.

10150. Planning:

P2016/0083

Applicants name: NPT Homes, Ty Gwyn, Brunel Way, Baglan Energy Park, Neath, SA11 2FP.

Site Location: Riverside Court, Pontardawe, Swansea.

Proposed Development: Detached terrace of 4 Scooter Storage units.

Resolved No objection.

10151. Grants: Council was advised that a Finance committee was required to discuss grants for 2016/17.

Resolved that a Finance Committee will be arranged.

10152. One Voice Wales area Committee: Council Nicholson was unfortunately unable to attend.

Resolved to be noted.

10153. Clerks Report – trees adjacent to Parc Chwarae Teg: Council was advised that a review had been carried out on the trees adjacent to the park that showed work required on all four trees.

Resolved that the Clerk will arrange for a suitable qualified tree surgeon to carry out the required work.

10154. Account Schedule 320:

Resolve that Account Schedule 320 totalling £20461.74 and the Bank Reconciliation be accepted in accordance with Standing Orders.

10155. Local Government Act 2000: Model Code of Conduct: Councillors had been provided with the new code prior the meeting and had been asked to advise the Clerk of any queries. There were none.

Resolved to be noted.

10156. Email receive from Lydia Davies re Ynysmeudwy Park participation event: Council was advised that a group of local residents in conjunction with Llangiwig school were looking to hold a participation event at Ynysmeudwy Park to get feedback from local residents on what additional equipment they would like to see at the park. The community engagement event will then provide feedback to the Town Council in order to support their grant applications. Lydia requested £190 in order to purchase prizes for the treasure hunt together with funds for an Art workshop run by a local artist for the children on the day of the event.

Resolved that a grant of £200 will be awarded.

10157. Email received from the Riverside Centre: Council was advised that the Riverside Centre had now been rebranded as the 'Glantawe Outdoor education Academy' and they were looking for grants to support their work. They wished a 'Letter of Support' from the Town Council to accompany their grant application. Due to the tight time scales and with the agreement of the Clerk and Mayor a 'Letter of Support' had been provided

Resolved that the decision be ratified.

10158. National Development Framework consultation: Councillors had been provided with details of the consultation prior to the meeting. The following issues were raised:

- The layout of the document was not effective

- Visibility of tick boxes was not effective
- Eisteddfod was mentioned but no indication of which Eisteddfod
- There was no indication if some of the drop in sessions were to be held outside of business hours to accommodate working people.
- There was reference to EU Regulation which may not apply. It was therefore suggested that decisions should be deferred until after the EU exit referendum.
- Reference made to Community Councils but not Town Councils
- Reference made to some specific Unions but not other Unions in Wales. Why not all?
- One Voice Wales was stated as a core stakeholder. Why not all Town and Community Councils as not all are One Voice Wales members
- Blaenavon Town Council and Bangor City Council were specifically included. Why just these two?

Resolved that the feedback will sent to the required Directorate.

10159. Urgent Road Safety Matters:

- Council was advised that a Culvert in Trebanos was considered dangerous.
- Councillor Purcell advised Council of a Community speeding initiative that Sergeant James had set up which would tackle ‘hot spots’ for speeding and dangerous parking such as the road outside Llangiwig school.
- A bus shelter had been placed outside Pontardawe Police Station but there did not seem to be road markings indicating that this area was a bus stop.

Resolved that the Clerk will request the County Borough review the safety of the culvert and Councillor Purcell will contact the County Borough with regard to the bus stop road markings.

10160. Time and Date of Next Meeting: The next Ordinary meeting is due to be held at Ynysmeudwy Hall on the 11th April 2016.

Signed Dated