

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup>  
November 2011 at Trebanos Community Hall commencing at 6:45p.m**

**8697. Present:** Councillors B Williams (presiding), Mrs E Puzey, V Thomas, Ms. S Northcott, A Nicholson, Mrs C Lambourne, Mrs J Bowen, M James, H Evans, Mrs L Purcell, A E Williams, H Pickrell, D B Thomas

**Apologies:** Councillor D Harris

**8698. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interest:** Councillor M James and Mrs L Purcell declared an interest in item 5 of the agenda, (Amman Tawe Wind Farm) and left the meeting for the duration as a proposed planning application was discussed, Councillor Mrs L Purcell also declared an interest in item 7 on the agenda (planning) and took no part in the discussion.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8699. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting dated 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

**8700. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

**8701. Matters raised by members of the public:**

A representative of Tawair gave details of their proposed community radio station, and requested that Council consider a grant if the proposal becomes a reality.

A representative of the protesters against the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm provided some details on current traffic movements that had been collected by their group, which indicated that already the level of additional traffic on the A474 was significantly higher than the proposed figure provided by the County Borough Council.

**8702. Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm construction traffic:** Council brought forward the discussion on the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm construction traffic.

Council was advised of the meeting held at Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011 with the Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot Council, together with the Director of the Environment, Head of Planning and the Engineering manager together with the Town Clerk and a number of Town Council Members. (Appendix 1). The Town Clerk confirmed that the information requested from the County Borough during this meeting had been received.

Various points were discussed and an additional table of queries based on the information held was devised.

**Resolved** that the Clerk contact the County Borough Council and Police to clarify the following points

- What remedial work would need to be carried out in the vicinity of Pontardawe to allow the large turbine vehicles to navigate through the town?
- Exactly what contingency plans would be put in place to ensure Emergency vehicle have access to Rhyd y Fro during turbine transit, especially if there was a breakdown of the turbine transport vehicle?
- The times that the abnormal load vehicles were expected to be travelling through Pontardawe and Rhyd y Fro.
- What plans have been put in place for the vehicles of residents of Rhyd y Fro that routinely park at the kerb, but will be required to park elsewhere during the transport of the turbines?
- Confirmation of that the vehicle movements are being monitored by the County Borough, together with details of their current figures.

**8703. Noise pollution from local Public Houses:** Councillor Purcell requested that constituents who contacted Members with complaints of ongoing noise pollution should be advised that they would need to keep a 'noise diary', give access to their homes to County Borough Council staff for monitoring purposes and in the event of court proceedings, be willing to act as a witness, as without this evidence the County Borough would not be able to proceed.

With regard to 'One Off' issues, the Clerk confirmed that 'Temporary Event Notices' were now included in the weekly list of licence applications sent to the County Borough Members, so that they would be aware of the potential for noise pollution during these times, and would be in a position to monitor accordingly.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8704. Police Matters:** Council was advised that the information from the most report form Inspector Dan Thomas for October 2011.

Criminal damage, violence against the person, theft of and from motor vehicles and overall recorded crime had all fallen.

Offences of burglary had increased (four offences)

It was however stated that a number of persons had been arrested in relation to offences across Neath Port Talbot and Pontardawe which was reassuring.

Detected crime had increased by 1%.

Overall crime across the area had fallen during October, which represented 53 fewer victims of crime within the community.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8705. Ynni'r Fro Programme:** Council was advised that contact had been made with this organisation and a site meeting had taken place, when a number of Councillors together with the Clerk and representatives from the organisation reviewed two sites for potential hydro electric schemes within the Town.

The Clerk confirmed that further contact had taken place with the organisation, and that the potential for hydro electric in this area was being pursued by the organisation.

**Resolved** that Council will be kept informed of developments.

**8706. Herbert Street Improvements:** The Clerk advised Council a meeting had been held between the Civic Society and Neath Port Talbot Council in October and that the tablets were to be repositioned across the road from the Chapel in Holly Street.

Council then discussed the position of the sun dial at the bottom end of Herbert Street.

Council was also made aware of an email received from a local resident, on the dangers currently being experienced by pedestrians outside the Art Centre, and the lack of parking in the Town Centre in the evening when the gate to the 'Paradise Car Park' was closed.

It was however determined that the access gate to the 'Paradise Car Park' was in private ownership and as a result the County Borough had no authority to request it left open.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8707. Winter Christmas Trees:** Council was advised that there would be insufficient time to organise these this year, as there were a number of considerations to take into account.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8708. Trebanos Park:** Council was advised that a number of children and young people from both Trebanos Primary School and Cwmtawe Community Scholl had attended a bulb planting session at Trebanos Park. The scheme had been a great success and it was hoped that by getting the youngsters involved, it would create a sense of ownership in the young people for the facility.

Councillor Pickrell did however express some concern over illegal waste that had been found adjacent to the park and requested that the Town Council once again contact the Welsh Water to request that their gate be kept locked when not in use.

**Resolved** that the Clerk write to Welsh Water.

**8709. Pontardawe Public Toilets:** Councillor Mike James confirmed that the car park and Toilets would be refurbished during the second stage of the Pontardawe regeneration, which would begin at 'the Cross' and move down Herbert Street to meet the completed Phase 1 regeneration in the spring or early summer 2012.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8710. Littering at the Bench on Alltycham Drive:** The Clerk confirmed that she had requested that the County Borough place a litter bin adjacent to the seat to prevent littering but had as yet not received a response.

**Resolved** to be monitored.

**8711. Ancient Fir Trees at Alltycham:** The Clerk confirmed that she had requested the County Borough place a tree preservation order on these trees to prevent them being removed during the building of the new residential estate, but had as yet received no reply.

**Resolved** to be monitored.

**8712. Planning:**

Meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

**P2011/0727**

Applicant: Mrs Jan Fratne, 36 Danygraig Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4DS

Site location: 36 Danygraig Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4DS

Proposed Development: Two Storey front and side extension, single storey side extension and incorporation of adjacent land into residential cartilage.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification and that the area is geologically sound.

**P2011/0756**

Applicant: Mrs Roz Tartaglai, Gotre Bach, Lane from Baran Road to Hafod Wennol Farm, Rhyd y fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4RU.

Site location: Gotre Bach, Lane from Baran Road to Hafod Wennol Farm, Rhyd y fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4RU.

Proposed Development: Single storey rear extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2011/0755**

Applicant: Mrs Roz Tartaglai, Gotre Bach, Lane from Baran Road to Hafod Wennol Farm, Rhyd y fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4RU.

Site location: Gotre Bach, Lane from Baran Road to Hafod Wennol Farm, Rhyd y fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4RU.

Proposed Development: Single Storey Side extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2011/0870**

Applicant: TJ Morris Ltd, (T/A Homebargins), Axis Business Park, Portal Way, Gilmoos, Liverpool, L11 0JA.

Site Location: Former Focus DIY Pontardawe Retail Park, Ffordd Parc Ynsydw, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4AG.

Proposed Development: One internally illuminated fascia sign to front and side elevation and window graphics on front elevation and entrance and exit elevations.

**Resolved** No Objection.

Planning discussed in this meeting:

**P2011/0905**

Applicant: Barclays Bank, 1 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, EH14 5HP

Site Location: 16 High Street, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4HU

Proposed Development: Two replacement internally illuminated fascia signs, one internally illuminated projecting sign and two branch nameplates.

**Resolved** No Objection.

**P2011/0904**

Applicant: Barclays Bank, 1 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, EH14 5HP

Site Location: 16 High Street, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4HU

Proposed Development: Replacement CCTV camera and ATM Surround.

**Resolved** No Objection.

**P2011/0537**

Applicant: Waste Recycling Group Ltd, Buckden Landfill Site, Station Farm, Brampton Road, Buckend, PE19 9UH.

Site Location: Pwllfawatkin Waste Management Facility (Tip 871), Rhyd y Fro, Pontardawe.

Proposed Development: Retrospective planning application for continued operation of engineering operations and final restoration.

**Resolved** No Objection.

**8713. Finance Committee held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2011:**

**This Committee discussed and Recommend on the Budget for the Financial Year 2012/13:**

The Clerk produced a breakdown of expenditure for the current financial year (Appendix 1) which included actual expenditure for first half year and projected expenditure for second half year. This was discussed fully and a number of pertinent questions posed.

The proposed budget for 2012/13 based on the expenditure for the current year was set out **(Appendix 2)**. This was again thoroughly discussed. The Clerk explained the basis of the budget was to ensure that there were sufficient funds available to support Councils current obligations. She also explained that for a number of years the Council had on the advice of the Auditor reduced the general reserves held. This reduction of reserves had supported the Councils expenditure and had allowed the Council to carry out its obligations without raising the precept.

It was however explained that the general reserves were now minimal and that to ensure that the Councils obligations could be met, this year an increase in the Precept was mandatory.

The proposed increase was therefore discussed.

The Clerk confirmed that currently the rate of inflation was approximately 5%, and therefore an increase of this amount must be sanctioned to ensure that there were sufficient funds for the current obligations.

In addition, the Council had this year agreed to support third party funding for a proposed new park at Cefn Llan of £5500, and that there was also an ongoing obligation to support the Youth Facility up to the value of £10,000.

**The Committee recommended that Council accept the budget (Appendix 2) which would increase the precept by the rate of inflation together with supporting the Youth Facility and the proposed Cefn Llan Park. It is therefore proposed that the precept be increased to £152,000. It was also recommended that a committee would be scheduled for the New Year to look at cost savings.**

#### **The Committee discussed the balance of grant funds available.**

The committee was advised that a number of requests had been received from national charities with local interests who had already received grant funding this year. It was agreed that these requests would be considered for 2012 were not considered in the meeting.

Three grant requests were considered.

1. The Lions Clubs International – A request was received to support this year's – 'Tree of Light'

The committee requested that the Clerk find out where the tree was to be placed this year, and also that the Lions should be made aware that usually grant funding was considered once, early in the year, and that in future their request should be forwarded prior to this meeting.

2. Pontardawe Chamber of Commerce- A request was received to support this year's 'Autumn Fayre' and 'Winterfest' by a grant of £500.

The Committee requested details of the dates of these events as they believed that the Autumn Fayre was not sufficiently advertised, but were happy to support the 'Winterfest'

3. Ynysmeudwy AFC – A request was made for £500 towards a new lawnmower for the club.

Council was uncomfortable with the request given the lack of funds currently held as a grant of £500 may be held for a substantial time before there were sufficient funds available to purchase the lawnmower which is retailing at approximately £17000.

**The Committee recommended that the following grants be awarded:**

**Lions Club International - £100**

**Pontardawe Chamber of Commerce - £500**

**Ynysmeudwy AFC – that the AFC be advised that a grant of £500 would be ring fenced for their use once they had obtained the balance of £16500 towards the equipment.**

**Resolved** that the decisions of the Finance Committee be ratified.

**8714. Committee dates for 2012:** The Clerk confirmed that the usual Ordinary meeting date for April 2012 would fall during the Easter Bank Holiday this year.

**Resolved** that the meeting for April 2012 be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 to prevent it clashing with the Bank Holiday.

**8715. Accounts schedule 271:** totalling £8837.62.

Council was advised of one payment to Mrs A Thomas of £16.99 was due to a paint transfer in Trebanos Park that damaged her daughter's trousers. Council was asked to accept that this payment be taken from general funds rather than claimed from the insurance due to the small value.

**Resolved** to be agreed under financial regulations.

**8716. Email from Tawair:** The Clerk advised Council that an email had been received from Tawair giving details of the proposed radio station and requesting that they be considered for a donation.

**Resolved** that the organisation be requested to provide a business plan.

**8717. Letter received from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council re the Christmas lights and parade for 2011:** Council was advised that the parade would be held on the Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011, and that the Christmas tree would be situated outside the Art Centre.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8718. Dynevor Terrace:** Council was advised that there were a number of issues with traffic travelling the wrong way down Dynevor Terrace, Quarr Road and Church Street despite the 'No Entry' signs.

**Resolved** that the Clerk would contact both the County Bough about signage and the Police about monitoring.

**8719. The Next Ordinary Meeting:** Council was advised that the next ordinary meeting would be held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at Ynysmeudwy Hall.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**Signed .....** **Dated .....**

## Appendix 1

### **Meeting held at Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Offices, Port Talbot on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011 commencing at 2.00pm**

In attendance from Pontardawe Town Council: Councillors Mrs C Lambourne, A Nicholson, Mrs L Purcell, Emyln Williams, Huw Evans, Mrs J Bowen, H Pickrell. Mrs D Phillips (Town Clerk).

In attendance from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council: Steve Phillips (Chief Executive), John Flowers (Director of the Environment), Geoff White (Head of Planning) and Steve Rees (Engineering Manager).

Mr Phillips commenced the proceedings by stating that he felt that there were two issues that he in his capacity as Chief Officer was responsible for.

- Was there valid planning consent?
- Were the contractors adhering to the conditions of the planning consent?

Mr Phillips confirmed that he was happy that both of these issues had and were being dealt with correctly.

He then went on to discuss the table of questions in detail.

With regard to the planning consent, he confirmed that the original application had not stated categorically but had implied that the construction traffic would be through Pontardawe, however, the subsequent planning applications had provided details of the level of traffic on the route. He was therefore comfortable that the members had been fully informed of the proposed route and the level of construction traffic that would move through Pontardawe to the site. He also confirmed that the planning inspector from the Welsh Assembly Government who had been called to inspect the original Wind farm planning application had not commented on the implication that the route would be through Pontardawe.

Mr Phillips confirmed that all the relevant information had been placed before members, and that there had been agreement to the planning, including the route for the construction traffic by the elected members of Neath Port Talbot Council. He was therefore happy that the agreement of the planning for the Access Track to the Wind Farm had followed the full democratic process.

It was confirmed that during the process, a number of methods of transport had been discussed, but that neither the helicopter or rail options were appropriate. They had also looked into a number of routes by road. The two routes considered were through Pontardawe and through Felindre (this had been provided to members through the Environmental Statement), however, as the Felindre route comprised of smaller roads, this was not deemed suitable due to the size of the vehicles.

The route through Pontardawe was seen as the most suitable as the road was 'A' grade and therefore wide enough for the large turbine vehicles.

Mr Phillips then went on to describe the various responsibilities.

Neath Port Talbot Council were responsible for ensuring that the fabric of the route was suitable for the vehicles. It was therefore their responsibility to ensure that the bridges, culverts and road surfaces were sufficient for the construction traffic.

The County Borough also had the legal obligation to ensure that the highway had adequate traffic calming measures during the construction i.e. traffic lights.

The Hauliers in conjunction with the Police were responsible for the management of the abnormal loads on the route and for ensuring that emergency vehicles were taken into account, and that the disruption to other road users was minimised during the transport of the wind turbines to the site.

With regard to the specific issues raised, Mr Phillips provided the following responses.

### **Gelligron Hill**

Mr Phillips provided copies an email that gave the specific details on the road structure of the route for the turbine transport. This provided confirmation that the work carried out on Gelligron Hill had stabilised the area. It also confirmed that the whole of the route had been reviewed and had been found suitable for the weight per axle of the vehicles.

### **Emergency Vehicles**

It was confirmed that the Police would be escorting the abnormal load vehicles during transit and would be in constant communication with the other emergency services. They confirmed that on various points over the route, there would be 'pinch points' when there would be insufficient room for other vehicles to pass, however, the constant communication, length of time at the 'pinch points' and the number of passing points on the route would in the Councils opinion prevent there being any delay for emergency vehicles.

Steve Phillips confirmed that they had a plan for vehicle movements, and it was agreed that a copy of the plan would be forwarded to the Town Council. They would also provide the Town Council with details of a means of communicating issues, and the Chief Executive stated that they would be happy to accept feedback on the plans.

### **Traffic Control at Cwmgors**

Council was concerned that there were significant dangers in Cwmgors already due to the initial construction traffic. Mr Phillips however confirmed that temporary traffic lights had been introduced to manage the problem, but admitted that these could have been employed sooner. He did however confirm that from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> October traffic lights were not legally required as contractors were not working on the highway. It was however stated by members of the Town Council that they believed that during this week that there was the most danger on the highway.

Mr Phillips confirmed that the position was being monitored, and that his officers were had been to the area four times that week, to ensure that issues were being addressed, but also stated that there would be some disruption as this was the nature of large construction projects, although this would be kept to a minimum.

### **Disruption to other road users and residents on the A474 during transport of the turbines**

The Town Council stated that they were very concerned about the residents on the route in Rhydyfro and for those people utilising the A474 to transport themselves and their families to school or work. They felt that the timing of the transport of turbines needed to ensure that it would not disrupt residents during busy commuter times. There was also concern over the parking of cars on the road at Rhydyfro, as these would need to be parked elsewhere during the transport of the turbines.

Mr Phillips stated that the County Borough, the Police and the hauliers would be discussing the times for the transport and that these things would be taken into consideration. He also thanked the Town Council for flagging the issue with parked cars in Rhydyfro and said that these issues would be discussed addressed and communicated to both the Town Council and the residents prior to commencing transport.

The members of the Town Council thanked Mr Phillips and his officers for agreeing to the meeting, and for the open and honest dialogue. Mr Phillips reiterated that he felt that this had been a constructive meeting, which had highlighted some issues which could now be addressed.

Appendix 2

**PRECEPT 2011/12**                      **£130,000.00**

**Expenditure 1<sup>st</sup> half year 2011/12**

<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>	<b>6,716.00</b>
<b>General Admin</b>	<b>10,255.00 (One off insurance payment)</b>
<b>Section 137</b>	<b>3,601.00</b>
<b>Halls</b>	<b>8,022.00</b>
<b>Rights of Way</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Wages &amp; Salaries</b>	<b><u>33,907.00</u></b>
	<b><u>£62,501.00</u></b>

**Projected Expenditure 2<sup>nd</sup> half year 2011/12**

<b>Parks &amp; Opens Spaces</b>	<b>6,500.00</b>
<b>General Admin</b>	<b>4,600.00</b>
<b>Section 137</b>	<b>2399.00</b>
<b>Halls</b>	<b>8,700.00</b>
<b>Rights of Way</b>	<b>2,000.00</b>
<b>Wages &amp; Salaries</b>	<b><u>35,600.00</u></b>
	<b><u>£59,799.00</u></b>

**Budget 2012/13**

**Parks & Open Spaces** **£21,400.00**

Including:

ROSPA annual park checks

General Maintenance

Summer & Winter Baskets

Garden Maintenance

Third party funding for Cefn Llan Park  
(£5500)

£2,000 earmarked reserve for Park improvements

**General Admin** **£20,000.00**

Including:

Additional estimated provision for election (£4000)

Reserve for training (£500)

**Section 137** **\*£6000.00**

Usually grants to other bodies

Can afford to decrease by £1000.00 in 2012/13\*

**Community Halls, Office and Youth Facility** **£30,000.00**

Including:

£10,000 reserve for support of the Youth Facility

£2,000 earmarked reserve for hall improvements

**Rights of Way** **£2000.00**

All materials supplies by the County Borough

No new machinery needed 2012/13

Wages & Salaries **£72,600.00**

No wage increased envisaged for 2011/12 there will however be some variation due to relief workers taken on as and when needed to cover holidays, sickness etc.

**TOTAL BUDGET** **£152,000.00**

Reclaimed VAT used as slippage – approx £4000.00 there by giving approx £24,000.00 maneuverable cash balance.

Factored in 5% inflation

£130,000 x 5% = £6500

£130,000+ £6,500 = £136,500 + capital expenditure £10,000 reserve for Youth Facility & £5,500 reserve for Cefn Llan Park = £152,000.