

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday 8th September 2014, at Ynysmeudwy Hall, Old Road, Pontardawe commencing at 6.45pm

9640. Present Councillors P Williams (presiding), Mrs J Bowen, D Harris, G Davies, H Evans, A Nicholson, Mrs R Phillips, H Pickrell, Mrs L Purcell, M James, D B Thomas, Ms S Northcott and Ms C Ford.

Youth Representatives – Harri Evans – Mason, Dylan Williams

Apologies: Councillor Mrs E Puzey, V Hotten and B Williams.

9641. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary interests: Councillors Mrs J Bowen, A Nicholson, G Davies and Ms S Northcott declared an interest in the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility, Councillor Mrs L Purcell declared an interest in Planning.

Resolved this be noted.

9642. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 14th July 2014:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 14th July 2014, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

9643. Welcome to Councillor Charlotte Ford: The Chair and Council congratulated Councillor Ford on her election victory and welcomed her to her first meeting of Pontardawe Town Council.

Resolved to be noted.

9644. Matters raised by members of the public: None.

Resolved to be noted.

9645. 'Time to Change' Organisational pledge: The 'Time for Change' team gave a presentation on their work to remove the stigma of mental health issues within the workplace. The campaign which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund, Comic relief and the Welsh Assembly Government works in partnership with mental health charities to remove the taboo of mental illness in order to tackle discrimination.

The Mayor 'Signed the Pledge' on behalf of Pontardawe Town Council to support the campaign.

Resolved to be noted.

9646. Pontardawe HUB: The Clerk advised Council that the project had been extended but at present they were still collating the statistics. A representative of Neath Port Talbot Council would therefore attend the December meeting to provide an update on the projects achievements.

The Clerk had however been provided with a statement which provided the following information:

- The HUB had proved to be very successful for NPT Homes Ltd, Citizens advice and the Neath Port Talbot Housing benefit team.
- Welfare rights were also now available at the HUB and the Credit Union was due to start from the end of September.
- Flyers advertising the new services were to be distributed shortly.

Resolved to be noted.

9647. Police Matters: The Clerk provided the following information:

Pontardawe:

The next PACT meeting was to be held on the 16/10/14 at The Cross Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

The main PACT priority was anti social behavior at Cwmtawe School – Additional patrols were to be carried out.

Total number of crimes for Pontardawe for June – 41 (Burglary 1, Anti Social Behaviour 13, Robbery 0, Vehicle Crime 3, Violent Crime 10, Public Disorder 0, Shoplifting 0, Criminal Damage 9, Other Theft 4, Drugs 0, Other Crime 1)

Trebanos:

The next PACT meeting was to be held on the 16/10/14 at Trebanos Hall commencing at 6.30pm.

The main PACT priorities were complaints of off road biking in the area which would remain a PACT Priority.

The Clerk advised Council that the steel storage container in Trebanos Park that was causing an issue for the Police, was to be moved to its permanent home adjacent to the refreshment stand in the next two weeks.

Council was also advised that there had been damage to the CCTV camera after it was deliberately targeted by a group of young people with a rugby ball. The offender had however been identified and had admitted his involvement. All cost associated with the damage were to be covered by the boy parents.

Council Members were concerned that the gate to the sewage plan was continuing to remain unlocked which was causing an issue with cars on the service road.

Resolved that the Clerk will write to Welsh Water to request the gate locked when not in use.

9648. Pontardawe & District Youth Facility: Councillors Ms S Northcott, G Davies, A Nicholson and Mrs J Bowen expressed an interest.

Council was advised that the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility had received no financial assistance for the 2014/15 fiscal year to date from Pontardawe Town Council and therefore there was still £10,000 from the budget available.

Resolved to be noted.

9649. Out of School activities brochure: The Clerk confirmed that the draft brochure was in the process of being completed and that it included art work from Cwmtawe School. The web site and social media pages were also in the process of being populated.

The committee had decided not to put on an activities fayre this year as they felt that the social media pages would be a more effective method of advertising the activities.

The Clerk wished to thank Harri Evans-Mason for all his help in the production of the brochure and in the creation of the web site and social media pages.

Resolved Council will be kept up to date with developments.

9650. Trebanos Park: The Clerk confirmed that the grant application to WREN for funds to refurbish the park had been completed and submitted. A response was due at some time in November. The Clerk also confirmed that the plan of the proposed park was on display at Trebanos Hall.

Resolved to be noted.

9651. Allotment Provision: Council was advised that a green paper consultation was in progress to discuss the provision of allotments and community gardens; however the time scales for discussion were quite tight.

Council was also advised that the Clerk had reviewed two possible sites for joint allotments with Cilybebyll Community Council in Alltwen and Rhos with the Clerk of Cilybebyll Community Council. The Alltwen site seemed to have numerous obstacles to the provision of allotments however the site at Rhos seemed to have significant potential. As Council had already agreed in principle to a Partnership with an adjacent Council in the matter the Clerk requested that the possibility be placed on the agenda for Cilybebyll Community Council at the next meeting.

Resolved that Councillor Nicholson will review the consultation and provide a response statement.

The Clerk will also keep Council up to date with developments at Cilybebyll Community Council.

9652. Trebanos Park Trees: The Clerk confirmed that the proposed action on the conifer trees at Trebanos Park had been discussed at the Policy and Resources Committee, with the recommendation being that the trees were completely felled and that the contractor should be the lowest bidder.

There was some disagreement to the total felling of the trees as there were a number of members who favoured a reduction only.

Council voted on whether to agree the recommendations of the Policy and Resources committee and provided 8 votes for and 4 votes against.

Resolved that the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee be ratified. The conifer trees will be felled to ground level by the contractor with the lowest bid. The Rugby club will however be made aware of when the action will taken.

9653. Cwmdu Glen: Council was advised that the management plan had been received and would need to be reviewed and agreed by Council.

Resolved to discuss at a Policy and Resources committee at 6.30pm on the 15th September 2014.

9654. Christmas lights provision 2014: The Clerk confirmed that following the Policy and Resources committee it had been agreed for a delegation of Members together with the Clerk to attend a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and the Art Centre.

The meeting produced a number of actions to be taken to generate funds and equipment to 'Light up Pontardawe' for Christmas 2014.

These were as follows:

- Town Council to confirm with INCO that they would be prepared to transport a tree on their HIAB without charge.
- Town Council to determine if local businesses would be agreeable to donating funds to provide a Christmas Tree for Pontardawe.
- Chamber of Commerce to canvas members for funds to stage the parade
- Art Centre to put together a grant application for the 'Mynydd y Betws' Wind Farm community Benefit fund in the name of the Town Council to obtain a grant for LED flags, pea lights and Christmas tree lights with third party funding of £539 which was within the budget.

- Art Centre to organise the project to create the led flags which would be used during the parade and placed on the flag poles in the town during festivals.

The Clerk confirmed that the application to Mynydd y Betws had been submitted however the status of the grant was as yet unknown. INCO had however confirmed that they would be happy to transport the tree.

Letters had been recently forwarded to the companies at the Alloy Industrial Estate but as yet only Lliw Building supplies had provided financial assistance.

Councillor Mike James then agreed that 'Pontardawe Taxi's' would fund £200 towards the Christmas tree.

Resolved that the action taken under standing orders during the Summer break to generate funds for the 'Light up Pontardawe' for Christmas project will be fully ratified by Council and that the Clerk is also given the authority to approach Cwmtawe School and NPT Homes for funds. Council was also happy for the tree and lights to be covered by the Town Councils insurance.

9655. Planning:

P2014/0801 Mr Bradley Newman, 8 Cefn Llan Road, Rhyd y Fro, Ponardawe, Swansea, SA8 4NA.
Site Location: 8 Cefn Llan Road, Rhyd y Fro, Ponardawe, Swansea, SA8 4NA.

Proposed Development: Felling of one Oak tree covered by tree preservation order number T213/T1

Resolved: The Council objects to the felling of Oak trees unless it is actually dangerous and likely to cause injury to person or damage to property.

P2014/0781 Mr Gary Thomas, Pontardawe AFC, BrynGwyn, 38 Penywern Road, Ystalyfera, Swansea, SA9 2NH.

Site Location: Parc Ynysderw, Ffordd Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe, SA8 4EG.

Proposed Development: Upgrading of existing football facility, infrastructure works to include new football stands, storage container, programme kiosk, pitch railings, boundary treatments and paths.

Resolved: No Objection.

P2014/0839 Mr Matthew Gillot, Archiception Ltd, 231 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 1EH.

Site Location: Rhyd y Fro, Pontardawe SA8 4SY.

Proposed Development: Request for a screening option under EIA Regulations for a 7MWp Solar Farm

Resolved that the Town Council does not have the relevant experience to comment and will rely on the expertise of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council to determine if the request is valid.

P2014/ 0094 Mr & Mrs Rod and Louise Williams, C/O St Marys Church, Ynysmeudwy Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, Swansea.

Site Location: St Marys Church, Ynysmeudwy Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, Swansea.

Proposed Development: Change of Use of Church to single dwelling and construction of detached garage.

Resolved No objection provided there is neighbourhood Notification.

Councillor Mrs Jean Bowen also brought to Council's attention that the plaque on the Toll House at Trebanos had been removed during renovation

Resolved that the Clerk will investigate the whereabouts of the Plaque and report back to Council.

9656. Policy and Resources Committee held on the 21st July 2014:

This Committee to review the maintenance required on the nine Mature Leyland Cypress and one goat willow adjacent to Trebanos Rugby ground.

The Clerk advised the committee that there had been no work carried out on the trees for a number of years and the Council had therefore requested a tree survey in order determine if any action was required to safeguard the public and to fulfil its responsibility as the owners of the trees.

The tree report conducted on the 28th April 2014 had stated that maintenance was required on all of the trees as their condition was poor, however, a reduction in the height of the trees or the removal of the trees in their entirety could be considered.

The committee discussed the merit of retaining the trees but reducing their height but decided that due to the ongoing costs associated with the retention of the trees, their removal would be more cost effective.

The Clerk had requested estimates for both the reduction of the trees from four recognised service companies and had been provided with estimates between £1850 and £3250 for reduction and removal of the waste wood. She had also received estimates from the same four companies for the removal of the trees in their entirety (the estimates were between £2800 and £4900)

The Clerk confirmed that all four companies had confirmed that their work was in accordance with BS3998:2010 and all had confirmed that they had Employers and Public Liability Insurance of at least £5 million.

The Committee recommended that the nine Mature Leyland Cypress and one goat willow adjacent to Trebanos Rugby ground are felled to ground level and that the company who had provided the lowest estimate should be employed to complete the work, subject to them being able to produce the necessary Insurance certification (The lowest estimate was ND Thomas at £2800 + VAT) . The Committee also wanted reassurance that the wood would be disposed of responsibly.

This committee to discuss the Christmas Light provision for 2014 (Plenary Powers awarded)

The Clerk advised the committee that additional figures had been received from the County Borough on the costs for the provision of the various Christmas lights for 2013. The committee reviewed the information and was still unsure of how the figures had been produced as they still seemed to include budgeted figures for staff and storage instead of actual costs.

The Clerk also advised the committee that the Christmas tree and parade that had in the past been provided by Neath Port Talbot Council was also not to be provided for 2014.

She advised the committee that a meeting had been arranged with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Art Centre to discuss matters. This was to be held at 6.00pm on the 23rd July 2014 at the Art Centre. The Clerk together with representatives of Pontardawe Town Council had been invited to participate in this meeting.

The committee identified a number of points that could be researched by the Clerk prior to the meeting:

- Request the cost of the purchase of the two 'Pontardawe' road crossing lights (as these would only be of use to Pontardawe)
- Whether the City of Swansea Council offered a service for erecting and dismantling Christmas lights in the same way as they provided summer hanging baskets. Together with estimated costs.
- The cost of providing a serviced tree from a commercial source
- The cost of the tree provided by INCO in Clydach (if these details were available).
- Whether the purchase /hire of Christmas lights or a Christmas tree fell within the criteria for the Mynydd y Betws Wind farm community benefit fund.
- The level of funds still available for 2014 from the grant budget together with any funds that were carried forward from 2013.

The committee also provided some ideas on alternatives to Christmas lights such as flags for the shop front holders that could be designed and produced by the schoolchildren in the area. This they believed could be organised by the Art Centre and may fall within the criteria of local grant providers.

The Committee recommended that the Clerk collate as much of the information as possible prior to the meeting on the 23rd July 2014 which can then be used in the discussions on a way forward. They further recommended that representatives of the P&R Committee together with the Clerk attend the joint meeting on the 23rd July 2014.

Parish/ Town Council Electricity Sales:

The Clerk confirmed that an email had been received from the 'Local Works' organisation requesting the Town Council submit a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act, however on closer investigation she had found that the Act applied in England only.

The Committee recommended that a 'letter of support' is provided as the Act was not applicable in Wales at the present time.

Discussion on the additional award to Sergeant Abrahams following his retirement:

The Committee was advised that Sergeant Abrahams was retiring from his post after 30 years and Council had agreed that he had always been a supporter of community relations and in particular partnership working with the Town Council and local community groups. It has therefore been agreed that as well as providing a letter thanking him for his service and additional gift should also be awarded in thanks.

The Committee recommended that a 'copper clock' be purchased and presented to Sergeant Abraham in recognition of his many years service. (Plenary Powers are available to allow the purchase to take place prior to the next meeting.)

Resolved that the Committees recommendations will be ratified. (See agenda point 9652 & 9654) –The Council also wished Sergeant Andy Abraham is invited to the next meeting as unfortunately he had already retired prior to the purchase of the presentation gift.

9657. Review of Pay and Conditions 2014: It was agreed that a Personnel Committee should be organised to review pay and conditions for 2014.

Resolved that there will be a Personnel committee arranged for the 15th September 2014 at 6.00pm

9658. Budget 2015/16: It was agreed that a Finance Committee should be organised to review the budget together with unallocated grant funds.

Resolved that a Finance Committee be arranged for the 22nd September 2014 at 6.00pm.

9659. One Voice Wales AGM and Motions: Council was provided with details of the motions to be discussed at the AGM and had no additional comment. They also decided not to send a representative as it was felt that the cost was prohibitive.

Resolved to be noted.

9660. Annual Return: Council was informed that there had been no qualification issues from the Annual Return to the 31st March 2014 and they were therefore happy for the Mayor to sign the Return on behalf of Council.

Resolved that the Annual Return to the 31st March 2014 be agreed and signed by the Mayor on behalf of Council.

9661. New Model Standing Orders: The Clerk advised Council that there had been new model Standing Orders issued by 'One Voice Wales'

Resolved that they will be discussed in the Policy and Resources Committee due to be held on the 15th September 2014 at 6.30pm.

9662. Clerks Report on the Financial Risk Assessment Actions: The Clerk confirmed that the Financial Risk Assessment had been diarised for January each year. The Freedom of Information and Data Protection DVD's were in the process of being review by Council Members.

There was no legal reason for Pay Phones to be provided at Community Halls and therefore as there was mobile phone coverage at both the halls; the Payphones would be removed.

The Clerk confirmed that as the Town Council was a 'Not for Profit' organisation there was not requirement for it to be registered with the Information Commissioners Office.

Resolved to be noted.

9663. Accounts Schedule 302, 303 and Bank Reconciliation:

Resolved to accept the schedule 302 totalling £13359.46 and 303 totalling £8312.66 together with the bank reconciliation, in line with Standing Orders.

9664. Welsh National Marine Plan: Draft scope: Council was advised that the full draft was to be issued in 2015.

Resolved to be noted.

9665. Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan: Council was provided with details of the current phase together with a link to the Councils web site prior to the meeting. There was no further comment on the proposals.

Resolved that once the Welsh Assembly Government agrees the plan, the Town Council request a representative of the County Borough attend a meeting to explain the effects of the plan on the local area.

9666. Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth: The Clerk confirmed that Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council had confirmed that they would fly the flag for the commonwealth on the 9th March 2015.

Resolved to be noted.

9667. Email received from Pontardawe Art Centre – Re Grant: Councillor Mike James declared and interest.

An email had been received from Pontardawe Art Centre giving details of a project that could be fronted by Pontardawe Town Council to create community activities at the Art Centre. Council felt that the project had merit in principle however as this was a longer term project and as the Art Centre was to be restructured shortly they were unwilling at this time to consider a partnership.

Resolved to review at a later date.

9668. Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation: A request had been received for all Town Council email addresses to be forwarded to the CISWO to enable newsletters to be forwarded.

Resolved that email addresses for Pontardawe Town Councillors will be provided to the organisation.

9669. Shared Community Charter: Council was advised that the draft was now available and would need to be agreed by Council. Due to the tight time scales it was agreed that the Charter would be discussed in a Policy and Resources Committee but that Plenary Powers would be awarded.

Resolved to be discussed at the Policy and Resources committee to be held at 6.30pm on the 15th September 2014 – (Plenary Powers awarded.)

9670. Wellbeing for future generations bill (Wales): Council was provided with details prior to the meeting.

Resolved to be discussed at the Policy and Resources committee to be held at 6.30pm on the 15th September 2014 – (Plenary Powers awarded.)

9671. White paper on the Reforming of Local Government: Council was provided with details prior to the meeting.

Resolved to be discussed at the Policy and Resources committee to be held at 6.30pm on the 15th September 2014. (Plenary Powers awarded due to tight time scales)

9672. Email received re Ynysmeudwy football ground: The Clerk advised Council that a letter had been received from Ystalyfera Community Council requesting a partnership to provide a children's play area adjacent to the football field on the boundary of Ynysmeudwy and Godrergraig.

Resolved that a representative of Ystalyfera Community Council be invited to the next Town Council meeting to discuss proposals.

9673. Email re Post Office pedestrian walk way at Trebanos Service Station: Council was advised that there was some concern from local resident as the pedestrian walk way had not yet been painted at Trebanos Service Station.

Resolved that the Clerk will contact Neath Port Talbot Council to determine the reason why that aspect of the Planning application had not been completed.

9674. Urgent Road Safety Matters: Council was advised that an incident had occurred on Swansea Road when a child had been 'clipped' by a passing car.

Resolved that the Clerk will contact the County Borough to determine if a pedestrian crossing could be placed in the area to assist with children crossing following the removal of the School crossing patrol.

Harri & Dylan would also request a young person’s view on the situation

9675. Date and time of next meeting: The date of the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be Monday 13th October 2014 at ARCH Hall commencing at 6.45pm.

Signed **Dated**