

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday 9th July 2012, at ARCH Hall commencing at 6.45pm

8911. Present Councillor B Williams (presiding), G Davies, D Harris, D B Thomas, Mrs E Puzey, V Hotten, H Pickrell, Mrs J Bowen, L Purcell, Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson, H Evans, M Thomas, P Williams.

Apologies: None.

8912. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interest: Councillor L Purcell declared and interest in any Planning discussions, Councillor Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson and Mrs J Bowen declared and interest in any discussion on the Pontardawe and District Youth Club.

8913. Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting on the 11th June 2012:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 11th June 2012, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council with the following amendment. In minute 8886 Councillor L Purcell left the meeting for the duration of the planning discussion and not the whole meeting.

8914. Matters raised by Members of the Public: Mrs E Ranft raised a number of queries over the initial co- option vote held during the June meeting, she then handed the Clerk a list of issues and queries and requested that these be looked into. Mr Ranft then asked if the 35 day rule had been considered prior to the second Co-Option vote.

Resolved that the Clerk would review the issues and would respond to Mr & Mrs Ranft shortly.

8915. Presentation by 'Tawair': Council was provided with a video presentation by Tawair.

Resolved to be noted.

8916. Co – Option of the one seat in the Trebanos Ward: Ms R Lewis addressed Council.

Councillor Mel Thomas requested that the Co Option vote be carried out only by Trebanos Councillors. The Clerk however advised him that under the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 Paragraph 39 it stated that all decisions must be by 'a majority of the authority present and voting thereon at a meeting of the authority' – This specifically precluded any resolutions other than by full Council.

Council was advised that following the Co Option vote at the previous meeting, guidance was required on the appropriateness of utilising the casting vote and although the standing orders had confirmed that the Mayor should utilise his vote in this instance and had utilised his vote following the meeting, this was not appropriate as there was a lack of transparency in the process. It was therefore agreed that to ensure transparency a second vote would be taken at the July meeting on the matter of Co-Option with Council made aware of the utilisation of the casting vote prior to the vote being carried out.

The Clerk confirmed that she had taken into account the 35 day rule and had been advised by the Election office at Neath Port Talbot Council, One Voice Wales and the legal advisor at the Society of Local Council Clerks that, as the Co-Option process had been started within the initial 35 days, then there was no issue with a second vote during the July meeting

Councillor Hotten stated however that he had lost faith with the Co Option process and would not take part in the Co-Option vote.

Councillor Hotten, Gary Davies, Mel Thomas, Mrs E Puzey and Peter Thomas then left the meeting for the duration of the co-option vote.

The Clerk confirmed that under Standing Orders there was still a quorum and the Co Option vote could take place. Councillor Andrew Nicholson proposed that the vote take place, and this was seconded by Councillor Dyfrig Harris.

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

Councillor Linet Purcell and Councillor Jean Bowen requested that the vote be by signed ballot to ensure that the vote was carried out in exactly the same matter as the original vote.

Vote 1

Mrs E Ranft 1 vote

Councillor R Lewis 8 votes

As there was now a clear majority, Councillor Lewis was declared Co-Opted, she then signed the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office, together with a notice confirming her eligibility to be a Town Councillor for the Trebanos ward.

Resolved that Councillor Ms R Lewis be Co-Opted on to the Council.

8917. Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm Traffic: Council was advised that an email had been received from David Griffiths at Neath Port Talbot Council giving feedback on the 'Dummy Run' from both the Developers and Neath Port Talbot 'Streetcare' Services point of view. The email stated the Neath Port Talbot Council felt that the movement of the vehicle went fairly well. It did however appear that some trees would require additional pruning in one location, however the extent of the branch removal was still to be determined.

There also appeared to be some vehicle hold ups which were inevitable, however the delay caused at Pontardawe by the removal of cones would be better co-ordinated later in the year when the actual move took place.

Council was also provided with detailed reports from the Developers and 'Streetcare' Services perspective.

It was also confirmed that a meeting was currently being arranged for the week commencing the 23rd of July in Port Talbot Civic Centre, when the Regional Policing Unit would be available to provide their feedback on how the vehicle movement went from their perspective.

Council discussed the details in detail and determined that there were a number of questions that required an answer and that there were a number of issues that required a resolution.

These were as follows:

- Ineffective communication with the general public, and Town Council.
- The effect on traffic queues of more than one of the heavy vehicles in convoy.
- Issues over the actual length, width and height of the dummy vehicle in relation to the actual fully loaded vehicles.
- Concerns that the 'dummy run' took place for only the shorter of the routes and was not carried out for the longer route taken by some of the vehicles.
- Concerns over the level of tree pruning that would be required

It was however stated by some Members that the Wind Farm itself was a positive measure to produce clean energy for the future.

Resolved that the Abnormal Loads Officer and Inspector Dean Thomas be invited to the September meeting in order to discuss particular concerns regarding the route. It was further agreed that the Clerk will forward the above email to each Councillor and collate Members responses prior to the September meeting.

8918. Police Matters: Council was advised that the next PACT meetings were as follows:

Trebanos PACT: 23rd August 2012 at Trebanos Community Centre, to commence at 6.30pm, the PACT priorities remain the same as for May.

Pontardawe PACT: 23rd August 2012 at the Cross Community Centre, to commence at 6.30pm, the PACT priorities remain the same as for May.

There were however additional concerns over parking in Orchard and Fuller street in Pontardawe and Alcohol abuse in the Church Street area.

Councillor Purcell confirmed that she had attended a meeting with the Chief Superintendent of Police to discuss a number of matters.

Superintendent Mathias stated that the statistics for Pontardawe did not support the view that there was a lack of police presence in the area and as a result he could not justify an increase in the number of Police Officers in Pontardawe.

The Chief Superintendent confirmed that all crimes needed to be reported, as this was the only way that the statistics would mirror the concerns of the residents.

Councillor Purcell however stated that the 101 non emergency number was ineffective and therefore it was difficult to report non urgent crimes such as cycles and scooters being used dangerously on the road.

The Chief Superintendent however confirmed that 999 could be used if it was felt that there was a danger to individuals. He also stated that the Friday drop in service at the 'One Stop Shop' was poorly attended and would be discontinued if it was not used.

Councillor Purcell did however suggest that the service had not been advertised sufficiently and that a review of the level of advertisement should take place prior to a decision being made to discontinue the service.

The Clerk also provided Council with details of a response received to the Councils letter requesting additional policing on weekends in the Town Centre. This provided a number of statistics that indicated that the level of policing was correct but also stated that the Chief Superintendent took the matter very seriously and would attend a meeting of Council to discuss if the Council had additional concerns.

Resolved to be noted.

8919. CoRe Funding and Trebanos Park: The Clerk confirmed that the application for CoRe funding was still ongoing and that she was also pursuing a WREN grant in order to increase the potential for improving the park.

Resolved that the Clerk will continue to pursue the grants.

8920. Pontardawe and District Youth Club: Councillors Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson and Mrs J Bowen, expressed an interest.

Council was advised that for this Financial Year grants of £2200 had been paid to the Pontardawe and District Youth Club in order to support its existence. Therefore a balance of £7800 was still available for its upkeep from the budgeted figure. She also advised Council that negotiations were in progress to hire the facility during weekdays for school terms from September 2012.

Resolved to be noted.

8921. Planning: Councillor Purcell expressed an interest.

It was agreed that a Planning meeting would be scheduled for the 16th July 2012 at 6.00pm.

Resolved to be noted.

8922. Review of Electronic notifications: Members were asked for feedback on the provision of electronic notifications. Council felt that this project was successful however the following points were made:

- Some Members copies of Microsoft 'word' were not in the current format, it was therefore requested that documents in both format of 'word' were forwarded to Members.
- Councillors Nicholson and Northcott requested individual email accounts used.
- There was some concern over difficulties some Members faced with screen based reading.

Resolved that the practice of electronic notifications be continued but that one paper copy of each document is kept in paper format at the Council offices for reference purposes.

8923. Cefn Llan Park: Council was advised that the construction of the park was still underway however the current poor weather conditions had caused some delays.

With regard to the naming of the Park, all the primary and secondary schools in the area had been advised of the naming competition and had been asked for submissions. Cwmtawe Community school was however the only school to provide a submission.

The suggestions were reviewed by Council and the park named.

Resolved that the new Park at Cefn Llan be named 'PARC CHWARE TEG'

8924. Accounts Schedule 279 totalling £16489.96

Resolved to be agreed under financial regulations.

8925. Community Safety Volunteer 2012 – Nominations – Council suggested that the Cefn Llan Residents Committee be nominated for the 'Team of the Year' for their commitment to the safety of the young people in Pontardawe and Rhyd y Fro during their campaign to obtain grant funding for a new park at Cefn Llan.

Resolved that the Cefn Llan Residents association will be put forward for this award.

8926. Minor Authority Representation for Rhyd y Fro School: Councillor Bob Williams took no part in this discussion, and the meeting was chaired by Councillor Brian Thomas for this item.

Councillor Bob Williams was asked to continue to act as Minor Authority Representative for Trebanos School. A vote was requested by Councillor Andrew Nicholson and seconded by Councillor Huw Evans. The vote was unanimous that Councillor Bob Williams continue as the Councils representative in this matter.

Resolved that Councillor Bob Williams continue as Minor Authority Representative for Rhyd y Fro School.

8927. Email re 28 New Road, Trebanos – An email was received re the requirement for road markings adjacent to their property.

Resolved that the issue be referred to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council 'Highways' department.

8928. Proposed Traffic Orders at Herbert Street/Holly Street, Pontardawe: An order was received stating the intention of Neath Port Talbot Council to impose a Restricted zone (No waiting, loading or unloading) at this location.

Resolved that Councillor Purcell discuss the effects of this order on the businesses in Herbert Street with Neath Port Talbot Council and report back to Council.

8929. Urgent Road Safety Matters:

- Overgrown lots in Trebanos causing obstruction to pedestrians at Trebanos
- Temporary traffic lights at Pontardawe Cross unsafe.
- Crash barriers which were removed for 'Dummy Run' now replaced packed in sand rather than 'Hard Core'
- Pavement on Swansea Road opposite Ynysderw House, in a bad state of repair.
- Email received from Pastor Ron Williams stating the danger of large lorries being directed through Pontardawe Town Centre during the movement of turbine parts.
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Resolved that Clerk advise the proper authorities and will also request that the Town Centre is restricted to 7.5 tonnes unless for access.

8930. Date of the next meeting: The date of the next meeting is due to be held at 6.45pm on the 10th September 2012 at Trebanos Hall.

Signed

Dated.....