

**ENBY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD**  
**7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023**

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	Cllr Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall	Mayor
	Cllr C Dale	
	Cllr D Whitehurst	
	Cllr L Blackhall	
	Cllr D Morgan	
	Cllr T Hallett	
	Cllr J Rossiter	
<b><u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u></b>	Mr A Davies	Clerk
	Mrs S Thompson	Assistant to the Clerk
	Mr Mike Cavanagh	PCC

The Mayor welcome Mr Mike Cavanagh and thanked him for attending TTC's meeting.

**226. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

None received.

**227. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS IN ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW**

Members are requested to identify the nature of the interest and indicate whether it is personal or prejudicial.

**228. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED DURING TONIGHT'S MEETING AND WHICH IS OPEN FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS ARE EXCLUDED**

**a. Mr Cavanagh, PCC will be in attendance to further discuss his letter at Agenda Item 7c**

Mr Cavanagh thanked councillors for giving him the opportunity to attend. PCC have faced a decade of cuts, and many responsibilities have been passed on to senior officers. He manages libraries, among other things and is proud that he has managed to keep libraries open.

Over time they have reduced the team to 2 managers, reduced energy costs, and involved many volunteers to reduce costs without closing libraries.

His intention had been, because there were no more savings he could find, to ask the Town Council if they could contribute towards the costs of Tenby Library this year to maintain current opening hours rather than having to cut them.

There is however good news, he continued. PCC had agreed their budget for the year last week and, as of today, he had a stay of execution over having to make cuts this year.

That wasn't to say that the request may not come back next year, added Mr. Cavanagh who then asked if TTC are minded to support Tenby library in the future.

While the pressure is off at the moment, do Tenby see library as important to the town? Performance data was provided which indicates that the facility is starting to bounce back after the pandemic. The library is also important for social contact, preschool and computer use. It was for more than just borrowing books, with over 15,000 visits to library in the last 10 months.

Cllr Whitehurst feels this budget settlement was good news while Cllr Hallett added the library is an essential part of the community. We need it and we must use it or lose it, he said.

Cllr Blackhall acknowledged the value of the library and it's continuation, although he added that it also services outlying areas. How we factor this into future decisions, was something that the town council would have to consider.

When Pembrokeshire cuts services local town and community councils are asked to step in so effectively the town will get the same service as before but at greater cost via the local precept.

He noted that the library was housed in a building that served a number of other purposes and wondered if PCC had looked into a Trust to run the building and therefore save some of those costs.

Mr. Cavanagh explained that there are 8 libraries in the county supported in some way by town and community councils. The same question was raised over outlying communities using the facilities too and those local communities were written to.

Replies had included that they have use of the mobile library service or, if one or two said yes it would be problematic if some contributed and others did not. It gets nowhere sadly, he said.

Double taxation is a reality, he admitted. Everything is important, it just depends on priority. When PCC are looking at saving £20 million it is hard. He acknowledged that it was also difficult for town and community councils when all departments were asking if they could assist with funding services.

Often these requests came after precepts had been agreed and town and community councils were placed in a difficult position as to what should take priority on their limited resources.

He was speaking to the Chief Executive to see if all departments could get their requests to town and community councils in the Autumn, before budget setting, so members could make informed decisions when agreeing the precept.

He said he had, some time ago, looked at relocation of the library but there was nothing available in Tenby. PCC had also looked at creating a Trust as some other counties had but the model didn't work for Pembrokeshire.

Cllr Dale thanked Mr Cavanagh for coming. TTC wish to be supportive and there are other ways TTC can support. We are considering how we can make the town council more accessible and relevant with a possibility of moving to a more central and visible space within the De Valence to be able to communicate better with the public. That's how we keep our libraries and other services, he ventured.

Mr. Cavanagh reiterated that his intention is, if financial support is needed for future years, to make the request earlier, before we set the precept. He will also continue his discussion with the Chief Executive for all departments to outline their financial position and if they need assistance from the town and community councils so all will then know the situation.

The Mayor thanked Mr Cavanagh for attending.

**229. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES OTHER THAN THOSE MARKED NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEING GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT**

Proposed by Cllr Hallett and seconded by Cllr Morgan.

**RESOLVED**

**That items of Correspondence and Committee Minutes other than those items marked Not for Publication be given to members of the Press present.**

**230. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Resolved that the Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.**

**231. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

- a. **Page 116 Item 203 – Resignation of Councillors**: Following the resignation of councillors, the Clerk had notified PCC and the call for an election had gone out.

The period ended last Wednesday and PCC confirmed to the Clerk that insufficient requests calling for an election had been received in either the North or South ward.

The Town Council was now required to fill these vacancies via co-option, which should take place as soon as practicable.

Those interested in putting themselves forward for councillor should write to TCC suggesting what they could bring to the table.

Cllr Blackhall referred to timescale and process in relation to the co-option. TTC need to get this right, he stressed.

On an ideological level, elections are better, he said. That said, had there been contested elections it would have cost the town council £14,000 so he was rather glad this amount is not going to be spent.

However, process is important. As the councillors left 9 months after being elected by the public it will be 4 years before our electorate have the option to remove any councillors we co-opt, Cllr. Blackhall continued.

This needs to be conducted in an as careful and transparent a way as possible. There may be people out there asking why no election, there will be the inevitable criticism, it must be done in a clear, open and transparent way.

We should look at interviewing potential councillors, publicise the opportunity to chat with all councillors informally to see how they can work with us; how they can contribute to make our council and our town better.

We should make the Code of Conduct and the Guide to being a Good Councillor available for them to have a look at. Let people come and see what we do, meet with members then they can put their names forward.

We also need to be clear about what happens if insufficient people come forward, or what happens if, in our view, someone comes forward who we feel is wholly inappropriate. Perhaps clarification is needed before the next meeting, he added.

Cllr Dale feels it is all about communication, it is up to us to take responsibility to ensure people know about these vacancies and how to apply.

Council meetings are free for all to attend to see what we do.

The Mayor suggested we remind members of public that they can come along to our April meeting to sit in and watch. Many don't understand what goes on and, once elected or co-opted, it can be very daunting for those first few meetings, she continued. It would be good for any potential co-optees to get a feel first.

She added that at 7 pm on 21<sup>st</sup> March she would be holding a 'quarterly' get together.

The last was a very good evening, and she would be inviting the RNLI, Coastguard, Firefighters and PCC Refuse Collectors among others. This may be an opportunity for whoever is interested in becoming a councillor to come

along and have an informal chat with existing members in a sociable and friendly setting.

The Clerk suggested that members set a closing date for receipt of applications. He suggested interviews with potential candidates and appointment at the May meeting as, if elections had been called for, May would have been the likely date set to hold them.

Cllr Morgan felt it would be good to resolve the matter before the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

Cllr Hallett reminded us that councillors represent the public and that councillors are volunteers.

It was agreed that potential candidates write expressing interest by 21<sup>st</sup> April. This would give the Clerk the opportunity to invite them to the May meeting.

The Clerk said, while the co-option process had to be advertised, it was not compulsory to do so in the local press.

Cllr Hallett felt that the process needed widest publicity and moved that an advert be placed in the Tenby Observer. Cllr Morgan suggested maybe more than one advertisement would be needed.

Cllr. Hallett agreed to amend his proposal and that two adverts be placed in the press a fortnight apart and Cllr. Morgan seconded.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the co-option process be advertised as widely as possible, including two paid for adverts in the local press.**

**Further that the closing date for written application be 21<sup>st</sup> April, with co-option taking place at the May meeting.**

- b. **Page 117 Item 205 - Dwr Cymru** : Cllr Whitehurst told members that Dwr Cymru will be returning to TTC on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2pm to 4pm. This will be a working party. He hopes to get some answers to his queries and to get some decisions on whether Dwr Cymru are investing more in the sewerage systems of Tenby.
- c. **Page 121 Item 208d - Grit Bins**: The Clerk told members that no written requests had been received. A number of verbal offers have been made but nothing has been received in writing. Could we put the offer out again? The Mayor suggested putting information in the Tenby Observer.

Cllr Dale feels that all know his views on the De Valence café, why can we not put a notice on windows of the café until it's future is decided? People walk past and can look in with all this information for all to see.

The Clerk said he would make enquiries with the Trust.

- d. **Page 122 Item 209a – Provision of Rubbish Bins:** The Mayor is meeting with Cllr Chris Williams, Cllr Rhys Jordan, Mr McCarthy and Nick Young of PCC to discuss ways forward on the rubbish issue. Mr. McCarthy was on leave this week and was unable to attend tonight’s meeting but would be attending the next TTC meeting.
- d. **Page 123 Item 212a - Clarby Warriors:** The Clerk had made enquiries with the Clarby Warriors and at this time there are no Tenby residents who are members of the teams. Of course that could change in the future.

Cllr Dale proposed TTC write and explain that at this time due to limited resources we are unable to make a donation.

**RESOLVED**

**That sadly TTC are not in a position to offer financial assistance at this time.**

- e. **Page 124 item 212b - Ysgol Greenhill School:** The Clerk had been handed a letter of thanks from the Year 9 football team which he read to councillors.

Cllr. Blackhall felt TTC should share this letter with the Tenby Observer and invite the team to attend after they have won tournament!

The Mayor was delighted to receive the letter, adding that now the school is out of special measures, they were humbled by the council’s support. All are working so hard, putting their all into the school and the pupils. The Head is very grateful.

**232. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:**

- a. **Resident of St Mary Street – Copy of letter sent to Mr McCarthy, PCC**

The Clerk told councillors that he believed Mr McCarthy was going to write directly back to the resident. The Mayor had spoken to the neighbours about the work in progress and tried to explain that PCC have a plan to try and reduce costs and be more environmentally friendly .

Cllr Blackhall suggested that TTC write separately to the letter’s authors to say that TTC absolutely share their sentiments as to sustainable planting and that all involved are looking at a more sustainable resolution for maintenance of the town’s green spaces.

Concerning the Rotary Gardens, there was no value in the soil that was removed and this change of direction to a more sustainable approach will mean that PCC will not be pumping 120 gallons of water a day onto just this one garden, said Cllr. Blackhall.

It is a work in progress and eventually it will look lovely, he added.

The Clerk added that PCC were also looking at planting daffodils in the beds to reduce the 'off season' impact of the basket rails.

**b. Plastic Free Tenby – Town Council support request**

Our Community Engagement Officer, explained that the 'how to be plastic free' system had changed. People were encouraged to go online and sign up.

One of the criteria required to achieve Plastic Free status for the town was a commitment from the town council to support the aims of the group.

While TTC had resolved this historically was it possible to get the resolution renewed please?

Cllr. Blackhall proposed we do so and the Mayor seconded.

**RESOLVED**

**Members reaffirm their support for Plastic Free Tenby and their aims to reduce the use of plastic within the town.**

**c. Mr. M. Cavanagh, PCC – Tenby Library**

Noted. To be reconsidered in the Autumn.

**d. Mr D Llywelyn, Police and Crime Commissioner – Here for You event**

Haverfordwest is the nearest venue listed for the 'Here for You' event on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023. The invitation was open all councillors. Cllr Dale said he would be more than happy to attend.

**233. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS FOR FEBRUARY (INCLUDING SCHEDULED PAYMENTS, UNPRESENTED CHEQUES, RECEIPTS, ACCOUNT BALANCES, BUDGET MONITORING TO DATE AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS) AND CONSIDER ANY ISSUES ARISING**

The Clerk had no matters to bring to the councillors' attention. Any comments asked the Mayor? Cllr Blackhall proposed accepting the accounts and Cllr Dale seconded.

**RESOLVED**

**That the accounts for February (including scheduled payments, unpresented cheques, receipts, account balances, budget monitoring to date and bank reconciliations) and consider any issues arising.**

**234. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REQUESTS FOR GRANT AID AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:**

a. **Matthew Hughes, Tenby ACF – Wales Army Cadets South Africa Venture 2023**

The youth are our future commented Cllr Hallett. We have supported many youth organisations in the past. Cllr Dale feels slightly uncomfortable with the terminology in the letter, the language used is unfortunate.

The Clerk told members that the grant pot was now depleted and that any contribution would have to be by virement from reserves. It was suggested that if we are to make any further grants it really should be for more than one person.

Members felt that sadly they could not offer financial support at this time but would refer the matter to the Community Engagement Officer to look into the possibility of financial support from a different source.

**RESOLVED**

**That, unfortunately the Town Council is unable to offer financial support at this time but the Community Engagement Officer may be able to assist in fundraising advice.**

235. **TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Morgan went to the recent AC/DC UK event at De Valence saying it was a great show. People came from all over country, over 700 people were in attendance and it brought many people to the town not just the venue. Cllr Morgan congratulated the Trust on what they are achieving. The venue is coming forward in leaps and bounds. Promoters are seeking out the De Valence. The investment is really paying dividends, the De Valence Pavilion is a premier location on the circuit.

The Mayor told members that the Chief Executive of Pembrokeshire County Council had visited the venue just recently.

Cllr Whitehurst told fellow councillors that National Resources Wales would be also coming along to the planned meeting with Dwr Cymru on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2pm to 4pm.

The Mayor had attended the Artisan Gallery at the museum which has been supported since the pandemic. It allows all to express themselves through art, brought many people out of themselves and allows and encourages creativity.

She added her condolences to former museum curator Mark Lewis on the loss of his dad.

The County Council has been busy and had recently confirmed their 2023/24 budget.

PCC's Chief Executive visited the town recently calling at the De Valence, the Edible Garden and the Old Chapel.

Many people don't know the Old Chapel exists and the work that it does.



After what had appeared in the media to be a negative week for the town, it had been good to show Mr. Bramble some positives, the Mayor added.

The issues with the sandbank at the Harbour continued and PCC were looking at a few short-term solutions. Hopefully that will help in the interim.

The Mayor said she also had a sweeping fit outside St Mary's Church. The rubbish dumped by the bins was appalling and she didn't want the parishioners to see the state when then were leaving church. This is also under discussion with her fellow county councillors for the area on Thursday.

The Community Engagement Officer, then gave a breakdown of all that she has been working on and working towards over the last few weeks.

Cllr. Blackhall welcomed the update adding the was exactly what TTC had hoped for from Tenby's Community Engagement Officer.

He noted that we were building up equipment through grants secured and wondered about setting up a 'library of things' that can be shared with organisations.

**236. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN – CLLR. BLACKHALL**

Following on from informal discussions Cllr. Blackhall wanted to confirm the establishment of a small working group to meet the day after meetings, look at what was agreed and how best to communicate these decisions to the public.

**237. TO CONSIDER ANY FINANCIAL OFFICER/CLERK'S ITEMS AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS**

**a. Town Crier**

TTC have been without a Town Crier since may last year. The post was advertised and no one came forward.

The previous town crier then indicated that he would like to come back.

Subsequently, following some comments that were made when his offer was discussed he retracted his offer.

He now felt that circumstances had changed and asked if his reappointment could again be considered.

While members acknowledged that he had done an excellent job while in the role previously they felt there were a number of factors to consider. It was decided unanimously to take the matter into private session.

**b. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report**

The Clerk explained that the draft report had been considered by members in November. The Report has now been ratified.

Originally members were all to receive a mandatory payment of £156 a year to assist with their costs but representation had been made by TTC and other town and community councils that members were proud to be doing the job voluntarily.

As such the option for councillors to refuse the payment by writing to the Clerk had been reinstated.

Members felt that TTC should have a future discussion on how the money is to be used if councillors decide not to take the payment.

c. **De Valence Trust representative and Committee membership**

Following the resignation of Mr Brown TTC no longer has a representative on the De Valence Trust, the Clerk explained that we need to propose a town council representative in line with the Trust's constitution. Cllr Blackhall proposed Cllr Whitehurst and Cllr Morgan seconded.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Trust be informed that Cllr. Whitehurst was now the town council representative.**

Regarding committee membership, the Clerk commented that the recent resignations had meant that a number of council committees did not have enough members to form a quorum.

Cllr Blackhall proposed that, until co-option is resolved, all members of council be made members of all committees.

**RESOLVED**

**That until the co-option process brings the council membership back to full strength, all members of council be classed as members of all committees.**

d. **Dwr Cymru**

The Clerk explained that Dwr Cymru would be visiting the town next month to talk to community groups and individuals to support customers in reducing wastewater, and help with bills. The project co-ordinator would like to come to talk to council in April to give an overview of the project. It was suggested that they also speak to our Community Engagement Officer about how to get their message out within the community.

e. **Handyman**

Condolences were offered to Mr Tommy Hewitt, TTC's handyman whose father, Fred, passed away over the weekend.

**238. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

**That the next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7pm followed by full council meeting at 7.30pm.**

**239. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

None proposed at this time.

**240. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS UNDER THE "PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT OF 1960"**

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