

TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
4TH APRIL 2023

PRESENT: Cllr S Skyrme-Blackhall Mayor
Cllr D Morgan
Cllr L Blackhall
Cllr C Dale
Cllr P Rapi
Cllr T Hallett
Cllr D Whitehurst

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Davies Clerk
Mrs S Thompson Assistant to the Clerk
Cllr M Williams PPC North Ward

The Mayor welcomed members of public who are interested in becoming town councillors to the public gallery.

The Mayor reminded members of the press and public present of Standing Orders in relation to photographing, filming or recording council meetings without Council's prior permission.

247. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Rossiter.

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

None declared.

249. 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. The Mayor introduced Mr Euan Hampton, of the Dwr Cymru/CARTREF engineering team who went on to explain to members how his organisation was supporting customers in dealing with water inefficiency. Free toilet repairs are offered if they have a leak following a free water efficiency assessment.

Support was being offered to households to try and reduce water waste in homes. Statistically 1 in 10 households have a leaky toilet. This wastes water and customers need support to fix them. He was seeking council support to make the community of Tenby aware of the support available through the CARTREF/Welsh Water initiative and help those who may benefit to reduce water waste which in turn reduces the cost of energy/utility bills.

Simple products like aerators make a difference to water usage and Mr Hampton thanked councillors for taking their time to gain more understanding of the project to enable them to promote it.

Cllr Whitehurst welcomed the efforts and went on to ask what investment Dwr Cymru is intending as he was aware that they were battling infrastructure leakage. He was open to support the initiative to share responsibility to reduce waste of water.

Mr. Hampton acknowledged these issues and said Dwr Cymru are doing what they can but are also trying to get customers to look at waste of water within properties too.

Cllr Blackhall said, in terms of making connections with the community, we have a Community Engagement Officer who works with a number of vulnerable groups and a range of organisations so would be a good contact for Mr. Hampton to share the services that are available. The Clerk will organise a meeting upon her return.

Cllr Whitehurst reminded councillors that Dwr Cymru; National Resources Wales, and PCC are meeting with a working party of members on Thursday afternoon 2pm – 4pm to discuss issues. They will be far better prepared to answer some of the questions members may have in relation to general infrastructure issues.

Mr Hampton told members that working with councils has worked well and if there are any questions, please email him and he will try to answer those questions.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Hampton for his presentation.

250. 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 Blackhall.

Cllr Rapi asked why Item 19 is in private explaining his experience at county council level was that, for openness and transparency discussions relating to ‘considerable funds’ were usually taken in public. The Clerk told members that legally sensitive information that may be disclosed during discussions.

RESOLVED

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

251. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Resolved that the Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 7th March 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

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

- a. **Page 131 Item 231a – Resignation of Councillors:** Those who wish to be considered for co-option have until 21st April 2023 to submit their letter of application. They will then be invited in for a chat. Cllr Blackhall felt that the press had been good at getting information out in the past. The process is rigorous, a number of potential candidates came and informally met current councillors at the Mayor's Reception last week. They have also had the opportunity to come today to see a meeting in progress.

He said that personally, he would have preferred an election, but anything that can be done to promote the co-option further by members would be appreciated to hopefully get lots of interest.

- b. **Page 133 Item 231b – Dwr Cymru:** A reminder to all councillors that there is a working party meeting on Thursday 2pm – 4pm regarding sewage systems etc.
- c. **Page 133 Item 231c – Grit Bins:** The Clerk told councillors that two estates have now shown interest in grit bins and PCC are sorting out installation.
- d. **Page 134 Item 231d – Rubbish Bins:** Mr McCarthy was due to attend a meeting but had an appointment elsewhere that could not be avoided. He also advised that he is unlikely to be available for Tuesdays in the foreseeable future but a different day could be a possibility.

253. **TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE NOTES OF THE TENBY EVENTS WORKING PARTY**

Cllr Morgan told members that it was a good but strange meeting for March. It does, however, give TTC plenty of time for planning. The King's Coronation was discussed and the Mayor believes seeds to be a wonderful idea and she hopes all the children in the town will embrace it. The Clerk said he will arrange for the Mayor and Mayor Elect to visit schools to hand the seeds out to children.

Regarding the Belgians, the Clerk has received a letter from Col Le Hardy attaching a draft letter that needs to be sent to the Belgian Prime Minister, who needs to authorise an overseas event. The Mayor will have sight of the draft letter before it is sent. Cllr Hallett moved we accept.

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

a. Darren Thomas PCC – Parking Places charges (for information only)

Cllr. Blackhall said that parking charges were always difficult but when you look at cuts having to be made by PCC there has to be a balance between parking charges going up over what else would if they didn't.

His worry is that the people who are most affected are those that work in town. They have to come into town to park to work as they have had to move further away from the town for various reasons.

He felt more could be done to promote passport schemes for reduced parking on a long-term basis. Perhaps some consideration could be made to introduce payments for maybe 4 weeks at a time as people may be finding it difficult to pay a large chunk of money.

Others who visit look at our charges and laugh at how low they are in comparison to other parts of the country. These only effect locals and workers and we need to be helping people who park regularly, Cllr. Blackhall continued. Weekly tickets are predominantly used by visitors.

While not in relation to off-street parking charges, the scheme where visitors can purchase a resident's bay pass should be abolished and should be pushed to car parks, he added.

Cllr Dale feels we are being informed of rises which are necessary but referred to letters coming up regarding closure of toilets. If prices for car parking are going up, will this provide extra funds towards our toilets, he asked? Why is Tenby in a position where it could potentially be losing the North Beach toilets, he continued. We cannot have a beach without toilets, this needs to be asked.

Cllr Rapi said that TTC has been going on about residents' parking bays for a while. A resident pays for a space only to find a tourist in their spot and then they are forced to park elsewhere. It is wrong that PCC are still permitting this.

Cllr. Rapi said there was also the issue of campervan parking on streets. Dog prohibitions on beaches don't work either. It all needs enforcement in the summer season.

The Mayor said that, regarding campervans, we are still waiting on Mr. Marc Owen, but dog issues are being addressed.

Cllr Whitehurst asked if it was right that historically the top floor of the multi storey car park was free for residents. PCC could show working people how important they are by reintroducing such a concession.

Wouldn't it be interesting if residents who came home and found someone in their residents' bay space had a free car parking space in the multi-storey until a resident bay space became available, he suggested.

Cllr Dale felt that the fact that more permits are being sold than there are available spaces was immoral. If paying money for a permit, then residents should be guaranteed a space. Cllr Blackhall agrees with all members' comments and, proposed TTC write to Darren Thomas to arrange a meeting where all these ideas could be discussed to try to agree a way forward.

Cllr Dale seconded.

RESOLVED

That Mr Thomas and/or Mr Marc Owen be invited to a meeting with the town council to discuss parking issues within the town at their earliest convenience.

b. Ms Katie Daly, PCC – Public Toilet Provision

The Clerk pointed out that there were two letters. Ms Daly's second letter had referred to an earlier letter which had not been received until he had chased it up.

The loss of toilets could become a crisis, said the Mayor, stating that, as a town, we are not as we used to be. We do not close for the winter anymore; we are a year-round destination and need toilet provision.

Regarding the North Beach toilets, many use this beach and there would be no hope of getting our Blue Flag back on this beach without toilets, she continued. We must look at the bigger picture.

Cllr Dale said it appeared from the first letter that serious consideration should be given by PCC to closure of toilets in Class 2 if they were in a holiday resort.

We are a holiday town, if we close the toilet on a busy beach like the North Beach, people will not come to Tenby, he commented. To think for a moment that this will not affect us is ludicrous.

Cllr Rapi said PCC have no money and they are asking if we could come up with money to resolve the issue.

He added that during consultation on PCC's latest budget proposals the largest negative response was to the closure of public toilets. Do they listen to their consultations or is it just a paper exercise, he asked?

We have to come up with a solution and find a way to keep the North Beach toilet open, said Cllr. Blackhall suggesting the setting up of a working party to look at ways of ensuring this toilet remains open, possibly through some form of partnership arrangement.

The Mayor has spoken with our Community Engagement Officer and together they are looking at different possibilities.

Cllr Rapi referred to a place in the north of the county where there were just three permanent residents but their toilets are open 24/7 even in winter.

Cllr Dale pointed out that one piece of information related to raising car park charges which would partially go towards toilet provision and another that say we are going to close your toilets. The Clerk said he believed car park income would assist in keeping toilets in car parks open.

Cllr Morgan felt that Tenby is seen to be one of the richest Pembrokeshire towns and PCC feel we would be able to take on these toilets just because we are a premiere resort.

However, he noted that the two that are being closed are the ones that do not produce any revenue through charging.

The combined cost of keeping both threatened toilets open would put £10 on each household as there are approximately only 3000 people paying council tax. This small number of people would be paying to provide facilities for a summertime population in excess of 50,000.

Cllr Whitehurst asked if these toilets should pass into our ownership, could we apply for grant funding.? He noted that St Ives Council took control of their toilets with some success. Perhaps we could find out what processes they used.

It appeared that toilets cost approximately £15,000 per year to maintain and run. There could be an opportunity for Tenby to do something special and provide facilities we could be proud of.

Cllr Dale suspected that for 'charged for toilets to' be self-financing it would depend on volume of usage.

While taking Cllr Whitehurst's point about asset transfer of toilets, he felt we shouldn't just take on 'a bit here and there.' If you do asset transfer, go for them all, he suggested.

There are toilets that charge 40p a go, like Castle Beach which must be making a significant amount of money, he continued. DANFO costs covers cleaning and still leaves a surplus.

Cllr Blackhall proposed a small group be formed to look at what options there may be and bring discussion to future meeting. Seconded by Cllr Whitehurst.

RESOLVED

That a working party be formed to look at toilet provision and report back to a future meeting of the council.

c. **One Voice Wales – Membership of One Voice Wales 2023-2024**

TTC are not currently members as charges were high, TTC were members once when a 50% reduction was offered for 12 months. They are the main body that talks to Welsh Government and understand the practicalities of operating local councils. They were again making an offer of half price membership for 12 months which gave the council access to advice and membership deals on training courses etc.

Cllr Blackhall feels there is a benefit of being a member, he proposed TTC join and ask for One Voice Wales to join us at a meeting to see what they can offer prospective councillors as first-time councillors.

Paul Egan, of OVW, is delivering Code of Conduct training next week and it may be beneficial for prospective councillors to attend.

They also provide CPR training and defibrillator courses,

Mayor feels it is a positive and most councils are now members of One Voice Wales. All in favour.

RESOLVED

That TTC accept the offer of half-price membership for 12 months.

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

All in favour. Thanks to Clerk for hard work.

RESOLVED

That the accounts for March (including scheduled payments, unpresented cheques, receipts, account balances, budget monitoring to date and bank reconciliations) be accepted.

256. **TO AGREE THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR PUBLICATION**

Carried forward to the next meeting.

257. **TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Rapi told fellow members that Ysgol Hafan y Mor had taken part in the Eisteddfod and were doing very well.

St Teilo's new head is making an impact and the school is progressing nicely. County have pushed some money into the school which really should be preserved as an historical building!

The Museum Trust is in the process of finding a new Manager having appointed a Curator. Progressing positively there. Issues with county are being resolved.

The Mayor congratulated Cllr Rapi on his work with Tenby Male Choir. Cllr Rapi thanked the Mayor for her kind words.

The Mayor had hosted a quarterly reception which was very successful. She thanked all councillors who attended. It was also nice to see those who were keen to join the council in attendance. It was a social event where prospective councillors could ask questions in a relaxed atmosphere.

258. TO PROPOSE THAT AN INITIAL MEETING OF THE GARDENS OF TENBY GROUP BE SET UP – CLLR BLACKHALL

This is something that came out of EPF project said Cllr Blackhall. Hopefully his background paper was self-explanatory. It is really positive how many folk are taking on responsibility for a number of our gardens. The aim at present is to get at least 25% of our gardens having volunteer input and the idea is to bring all these people together to share experiences and ideas.

Eventually it is hoped that all gardens of Tenby will have a rolling plan of refurbishment, some are under way and we will see these fruits in the future.

A Gardens of Tenby group will present a chance to give support and hopefully attract further funding and Cllr. Blackhall proposed that the Community Engagement Officer go ahead and arrange the first meeting of the group.

Cllr Rapi asked if TTC will be working with Tenby in Bloom. It was confirmed they would be invited to attend.

Cllr. Rapi felt there had been an appalling situation with regard to weed growth in certain public areas like the South Beach zig-zag. He also cannot believe that, on the zig zag going to south beach, there had been two red barriers blocking a hole in the fencing. A year and one month later they were still there which was appalling. Simple things like this bring down the town. All things have been reported but nothing seems to happen. It will be good to be able to discuss this type of thing within the group.

Everything in the town revolves back to the community with people doing it for the love of the town, said the Mayor. People were reclaiming ownership where PCC aren't doing what they could do.

Cllr Dale raised the issue of dangerously loose bollards in High Street. He has been on to county for over a year. The Clerk recalls that county did attend to some of the bollards but said they would come back to do the others.

RESOLVED

That the Community Engagement Officer progress the setting up of the first meeting of the Gardens of Tenby Group.

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

a. Training Sessions

The Clerk reminded councillors of training sessions starting on Wednesday, 12th April. Links to the meeting will be sent out to councillors by OVW.

Cllr Blackhall asked if people who are interested in becoming councillors would be able to attend. The Clerk said he would look into this.

b. Update with PCC on Brynhir confirmed for 24th April at 6pm. This will be a Teams meeting and details for this meeting will be forwarded onto councillors.

260. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, 2nd May at 6.30pm followed by full council meeting at 7.00pm.

261. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

None were proposed at this time.

262. 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"