

**MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MEETING HELD 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

**Present:** Cllr Dai Morgan Mayor  
Cllr Charles Dale  
Cllr Sam Skyrme-Blackhall  
Cllr Trevor Hallett  
Cllr Tom Sloan  
Cllr Emma Lewis  
Cllr Laurence Blackhall  
Cllr Laura Crockford  
Cllr Duncan Whitehurst  
Cllr Joe Criddle

**In attendance:** Mr Andrew Davies Clerk to the Council/Financial Officer  
Sharon Thompson Assistant to the Town Clerk

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**113. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Cllrs Phillips, Rapi and Evans.

**114. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW**

Cllr Criddle declared interest in Item 10a.

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

Mr Mike Cavanagh of PCC attended to discuss item 8a.

The Mayor reminded councillors of the reason for Mr Cavanagh's visit and suggested that Item 8a be considered directly following his presentation.

Mr Cavanagh introduced himself as PCC Head of Cultural, Leisure, Registration and Tourism Services. Included in this portfolio was library services.

Last year he had visited the council to explain that PCC, in a bid to make savings in the face of unprecedented budget pressures, were looking at reducing the service at Tenby library by one day a week unless TTC could assist with funding.

However, at that time, due to less budget pressure than expected because of a better-than-expected Welsh Government settlement, he had been able to withdraw the funding request.

This year sadly PCC was facing its biggest financial challenge ever and were looking at a £25 million reduction in budget.

As such he was again asking TTC if they could help contribute towards the library to maintain service at current levels.

He ran through performance information which showed that post Covid people were returning to the library for not just books but a range of other services, like internet access, printing or just even social interaction.

The data showed that the library was having a positive impact on people's lives and he did not want to close another day a week or reduce opening hours from 6 pm to 5 pm.

If TCC could agree to assist with funding of £13,000 annually for the next five years it would provide security for existing service provision and staff. If TTC were not able to support the service to the full amount any financial assistance would be welcome but the number of hours will be reduced according to how much TTC could afford.

Of the 12 libraries in the county 8 were now supported in some way by the town/community council. Tenby was one of the three remaining he was having this conversation with.

Cllr. Whitehurst felt that the town council should look to try to provide funding for the full amount for the next five years year if we can afford it.

This is one place we must support as it provides a vital service, he said.

The library has been an asset to town for many years, we must not lose it agreed Cllr. Hallett. It is not just about books but the many other services provided to people.

Cllr. Lewis echoed Cllr Hallett and Cllr Whitehurst adding that she was aware that many young adults in fulltime employment still had no access to the internet at home.

These are some of the people that use the library to be able to go online and access beneficial deals on home energy costs etc, she said. The library is also a place to keep warm and meet people. I fully support doing whatever we can.

Cllr Dale felt a 5-year agreement from TTC would provide security and give a reasonable length of time to make further decisions.

However, he was aware that there were possible partial, modular funding options TTC would need to consider, for example if TTC could only provide half the costs, it would still safeguard half the hours rather than them being lost completely.

He also suggested the possibilities of external charitable grants.

Cllr. Blackhall commented that there was a finance sub-committee on Thursday which could consider this.

I agree with everyone about the importance of the library. In terms of the financial side in the context of these discussions, to generate £13,000 extra for the library would be an additional £4.30 on our Band D council tax rate, he said.

Cllr Blackhall also wondered if discussions had been had around a trust arrangement for the building itself. Could savings be made this way as charities could acquire grants councils had no access to.

Mr. Cavanagh said it had been considered but when examined in great detail it didn't stack up. PCC has reduced costs in the building with energy efficient insulation and lighting but at the end of the day it was an old expensive building.

Ideally it would be great to move the facility but it was hard to find a suitable location in Tenby. However, he was still looking.

Cllr. Blackhall pointed out that Tenby library is used by people from the wider area too.

Is it just town councils that have been approached, or have community councils also been asked, queried Cllr. Blackhall.

Mr. Cavanagh said that community councils had been asked to possibly contribute in the past but most have pointed to their low precepts.

It has been attempted but it is incredibly complex, he admitted.

Cllr Dale proposed that TTC make an in-principal commitment to provide financial support for the library with the finance sub-committee to look in detail as to make it happen. Cllr Blackhall seconded. All in favour.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That TTC make an in-principal commitment to provide financial support for the library with the finance sub-committee to look in detail as to the funding options.**

The Mayor thanked Mr Cavanagh for attending.

116. **TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES, EXCEPT THOSE MARKED PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL, BE GIVEN TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT**

Proposed Cllr Blackhall and seconded by Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall

117. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.**

**118. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**Page 67 Item 100 - Allotments**

A meeting date has now been set for 3pm on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Meet at the allotments.

**Page 70 Item 105 – National Resources Wales**

Cllr Whitehurst explained that the flood risk areas of Merlin’s Gardens/The Green had originally been identified as a potential flood risk area back in 2020. This had been included due to a recalculation of flood risks due to climate change and extreme weather events.

However, since records began there had only been one flood and that was due to a burst main. Basically, it is a ‘not to panic but be aware’ situation, he said.

He added that there could also be a potential problem in that under resurfacing the road has been topped and re-topped so that they are almost level with pavements and the water runs into properties when there are heavy rains.

Cllr Dale added it was something to be mindful of. Rectory Court are currently sandbagging as there is some sort of ingress, he pointed out.

**119. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE TENBY NEW CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 26<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

The Clerk said that, following the meeting he had met with our cemetery maintenance contractor on site and outlined proposed works. He had suggested a beech hedge to mirror the surrounding hedges rather than saplings or a box hedge. This would not take as long to establish either.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall felt it had been a good meeting. One burial in 10 was now cremated remains and developing the area between the Old and New Cemeteries to accommodate this was a good way forward. We will be able to create a really nice area for those wishing to pay their respects.

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

a. **Mr Mike Cavanagh, PCC – Tenby Library Services**

Dealt with earlier in meeting.

b. **Carolyn Cox, Tenby Observer – Kindness in the Community Awards sponsorship**

Irrespective of our decision this evening, there will be a warm welcome to Councillors and partners on the evening. Please let the Clerk know if attending.

The Mayor felt this event should be supported.

TTC is engaging with, and doing more for the community. This is a great idea to recognise those working in the community and we should give it our backing.

This is not a huge amount of money and I think it would be fitting for us to sponsor the Community Volunteer Award, fitting for council to sponsor.

The Clerk advised that this would be paid from the Advertising budget, but there was not quite enough left to cover all the costs. Cllr Hallett suggested the shortfall could be made up from reserves, while Cllr. Blackhall suggested the 'Special Projects within the Community' budget.

Cllr Dale proposed that TTC provide sponsorship of £250 towards the Community Volunteer Award and that funding be vired from a suitable account. He was second by Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall.

## **RESOLVED**

**That under Section 145 of the LGA 1972 the council provide sponsor of £250 for the Community Volunteer Award at the Kindness in the Community Awards and that money be vired form reserves to meet any shortfall in the associated budget.**

c. **Mr Roger Penn – All Blacks stay in Tenby 1924**

Cllr Blackhall has read the book; it is very interesting. He felt that, for the cost of a letter or email, it was a nice idea to make an enquiry.

Let's go with it and see if anything comes of it, he said. It's a fascinating account, a lovely story that would be nice to recognise.

d. **Katie Daly, PCC – Toilet provision**

Cllr. Blackhall suspects we will be in a position to take on the financial cost of Upper Frog Street but not be responsible for day-to-day management.

The Clerk agreed that public cleaning firms he has looked at are similar to Danfo and would be unlikely to take on just one toilet under contract from TTC.

He suggested, like other town and community councils in a similar position, we fund PCC to pay Danfo to carry on. He was happy to set up a meeting with Katie to discuss this.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall stressed that, if the decision is made that we take on the funding of Upper Frog Street we need to get the message out there that we are doing this for the town.

She also hoped that PCC would accept our proposal to make the North Beach toilets an exception to their policy. If they say no, their reasons will be of interest, she said.

It was agreed that the Clerk arrange a meeting with Katie asap to discuss the next steps.

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

The Clerk mentioned accounts and whether we needed to look at our investments. Our two interest bearing accounts only realise 1.2% when there are accounts giving returns of 5% out there.

These are fixed terms accounts, where the investment has to remain untouched for 12 months. The question was, if we wanted to look at maximising our investments by transferring some funds to one of these, how much do councillors feel we could invest from our reserves?

Cllr. Blackhall felt that this was something the finance sub-committee could look at.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall moved accepting the accounts and Cllr Hallett seconded.

**RESOLVED**

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

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

**a. Tenby Round Table – Senior Citizens’ Annual Christmas Dinner**

The Clerk gave background to this item for newer members. Last year TTC gave £3,000 towards the dinner. Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall feels that it needs to be made clear that while the Round Table do a fantastic job in organising the event, TTC fully support, and provide a lot of the funding for it.

Cllr. Blackhall, proposed we provide financial support the same as last year in the sum of £3,000. Cllr Whitehurst seconded the motion.

**RESOLVED**

**That under Section 137 of the LGA 1972 TTC donate £3000 to Tenby Round Table to assist them with the finances of the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner.**

**b. Lions International (Tenby) – Christmas Market**

The Mayor explained that pre-Covid a Christmas market was considered to enhance our Christmas Festivities. It was never achieved for many reasons.

The Lions have been going to the traders asking about the possibilities of reviving the idea to support charities in the town. It will be local businesses who will be having the stalls.

As a local trader myself, I am all in favour of attracting people to town, said Cllr. Dale. This is a good idea, good for town and the businesses of town.

The Clerk added that this will be an annual license, giving the Lions the opportunity to hold other charity market if they so wished.

However, he and Cllr. Mrs Skyrme-Blackhall had been chatting with Mr Marc Owen, at PCC who had recommended that TTC look at getting the licence.

This will allow us to 'sub-let' the licence to not only the Lions, but other organisations who may wish to hold a market. We could also, if we so wished, hold one of our own.

The Mayor felt this could be the best way to go about as he felt a market in the Square would enhance the day. Getting people into town and go shopping in Tenby has proved a challenge, he said. Newport Pembs did something similar and has grown into a weekly event. This would be a good way forward.

It was proposed that we liaise with Mr Owen on this and inform the Lions that, whatever the case, the licence for the market would be funded by TTC.

Cllr Blackhall proposed and Cllr Crockford seconded.

**RESOLVED**

**That under Section 145 of the LGA 1972 TTC fund the provision of a market licence for Tudor Square to enable Tenby and District Lions to hold a Christmas Charity Market.**

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

Cllr. Whitehurst reported back on the Tenby Clean Seas Working Group meeting.

Dwr Cymru had expressed concerns that Beach Alerts are mis-reported as pollution incidents.

Sadly, Tenby North Beach returned elevated levels of bacteria in September which may continue to impact the bid to regain the Blue Flag status.

South Beach and Castle Beach also had higher levels in June, July and September which could affect their Blue Flags. None of the agencies at the meeting could identify the cause but would continue investigations.

Cllr. Whitehurst added that the readings on North Beach were actually better than some of the beaches in the county that had Blue Flags and was optimistic.

It's a lot cleaner than when I used to swim there in the 1970s, he said.

Dwr Cymru had been asked about the capacity of the Gumfreston Treatment Works to deal with the increased population during the summer and weekends as it was noticed that many of the alerts were at these times.

The treatment works had been designed to handle waste from 39,000 properties but could cope with more. They were confident that it could process the amount of waste coming into the site at all times.

The Salterns pumping station rising main has been identified as a high-risk asset and had been given high priority for funding improvements.

Kelly Jordan, of Dwr Cymru presented a preview of the new Dwr Cymru live reporting app which will provide real-time information to the public.

In conclusion, it is time for Dŵr Cymru and Natural Resources Wales to conduct further investigations into establishing the source of occasionally poor bathing water quality results and take action to prevent high levels of bacteria in the sea, he said. Along with improved testing comes an expectation from the public that the agencies responsible identify the cause and take action to put it right. Dŵr Cymru and NRW have made specific efforts to do this, and most of the time, our seas are safe to swim in. However, while some of our beaches continue to fail basic water quality standards, more work needs to be done.

Cllr. Blackhall thanked Cllr Whitehurst on the feedback and the outstanding depth of information provided.

He has succeeded in bringing the relevant agencies together around table having conversations together in front of other people, he said.



The Salterns and the other work they have been talking about was not on a priority list prior to these conversations. Tenby is coming under more scrutiny and it shows that town and community councils can impact on what happens, and can make a difference.

A fuller report of the meeting was available in the office.

Cllr. Whitehurst said that SPRAG had met with Lee Waters MS, the deputy minister for climate change and there had been talks about the investment in new trains which he hopes will improve reliability.

There was a possibility for more services but it would be some way down the line as there was difficulty finding drivers etc.

SPRAG may feel that they have a long way to go but they are keeping South Pembro. very much in the spotlight, he said.

The next meeting of SEPHCN will be 7<sup>th</sup> December at 5pm in New Hedges Village Hall, revealed Cllr. Whitehurst. We will be receiving details on what is happening with hospital re RAAC and an update on planning of their community health services event.

We are fortunate to have senior members of the Health Board in attendance and there will be a question-and-answer session along with a 'what to do' in relation to a number of pre-submitted scenarios.

Dental healthcare will also be discussed. There is an aspiration to increase community dental service operating out of the Cottage Hospital as part of the ambitions to deliver more local services from there.

Cllr Blackhall had attended a funding fair in Queens Hall, Narberth. There was a lot of useful information as to what is available. He felt it would be good to get a plan on what funding we may target over the next 12 months. A call for expressions of interest for the next round of the Enhancing Pembrokeshire Fund also went live today.

He suggested asking our Community Engagement Officer if there were grants for supporting investment in the library. He also felt it was worth looking at grant funding as a different way of doing things within our budget to release money from different areas.

Conversations had been ongoing over Tenby Market for a number of years with a joint committee continuing work to look at how improvements could be made under the 'levelling up' funding process, said Cllr. Blackhall.

PCC's Regeneration team has now identified some resources to fund pop up stalls, the idea being to create opportunities for some stalls for a day or a week to local business to develop.

As of 17<sup>th</sup> November, there will be space in a recently vacated stall for two 'pop-ups' and in the New Year PCC will look at whether or not things can be shuffled around, to create a central space where 2 or 3 pop stalls could be operated.

This is a short-term measure to try and increase the attractiveness of the market and boost footfall whilst we look at options for funding and development. The idea is that the more vibrant and busier, the more access there is for grants and funding.

The lead officer at PCC is passionate about the market and shares our vision for it.

Cllr Sloan had joined with the Mayor for a meeting at Greenhill with Tom Moses of Planed and the school to follow up with the Town Council's project to encourage more youth engagement. They had met with Greenhill School's Senedd and we have been involvement from Greenhill students in attending council events.

The head, Mr Haynes, admitted the structure had not been there in the past but now we've opened the door and he will do everything he can to support, said Cllr. Sloan. I was surprised at the number of students that were present and interested. Hopefully we can continue to work, in conjunction with Planed, to continue to move forward.

It shows TTC are committed and are serious about engaging with our community and young people. This will open up all sorts of avenues for further projects.

Cllr Crockford said she had been approached by some of those volunteering to work in the Paragon Gardens about the removal of some of the hedges that they had wanted retained as a 'wind break' by PCC's gardeners.

She asked if there were any laws relating to removal of hedgerows.

The Clerk says he was not aware of any specific laws but there was a moratorium on not cutting hedges between April and August due to the nesting season. As such he believed PCC did tend to cut hedges back hard in the winter to allow for the prolonged growing period when they could not be touched.

Cllr. Blackhall felt that it would be good for Area Maintenance to have a chat with our Community Engagement Officer to record which areas are being looked at by the volunteer teams and the work they were doing.

Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall had had a busy month in her county councillor capacity.

She had attended several meetings on next year's PCC budget. The position is tight, and there will be more difficult decisions. Councillors were making the case to protect certain services but there was a need to be imaginative on delivery.

On a more positive note, the plan for a 3G sports pitch for the town was progressing well and there may be an announcement soon.

The feedback on Brynhir had been very positive. There had been some useful meetings, where she had been clear that people in the town wishing to 'downsize' to free up larger family properties should be considered within the local letting policy.

She had also joined the Mayor and Cllr Sloan for the meeting at Greenhill.

She had also had meetings with the Community Connectors care team who were keen to work with town council. There had been an interesting conversation in relation to personal alarms for those who needed them. If you have something like an Alexa working in your home, you can activate the alarm with voice command, which was good to know.

There had been the well documented flooding issues surrounding Storm Ciaran and she had been out and about with the maintenance teams at the height of the problems.

The Ritec had been at its highest recorded level which had meant that the ambulance services had been evacuated from their base at The Salterns to Ysgol Hafan y Mor.

The problems had not been helped by fallen leave blocking drains particularly around The Salterns and the Clicketts. While the team had been clearing the drains it was a vicious circle at this time of year.

This Saturday would see the third Annual Poppy Trail for children at 11.30 am in St Mary's. Rev Grace had given an area within the Garden of Tranquillity to be the focal point for this event going forward.

The Mayor had attended a recent meeting of the Sea Cadets where he had presented them with a cheque from TTC.

It was an absolute pleasure to be down there and we were treated very well, he said.

I was speechless over what they achieve with no central MOD funding whatsoever. All their work is funded from grants, charity donations and cadet subs which was a real eyeopener.

The look on the cadets faces showed how much our donation meant to them.

I am proud that we were able to support them as they always turn up to support events in town.

They are not supported by the MOD like the army Cadets and are underfunded yet they are still growing and thriving and those involved don't always get recognition for that.

The Christmas light switch on will be 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023 accompanied by a Christmas market in the square.

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

The Clerk had attended a meeting at county hall for the launch of the Pembrokeshire Town and Community Electoral Boundary review.

PCC are charged with reviewing the arrangements for the effectiveness of town and community councils periodically.

PCC has commissioned the Boundary Commission to undertake the review which will consider the democratic health of the councils and whether the existing arrangements are sustainable between this review and the next in 10 years.

This will include the lack of candidates to fill seats at elections, an overreliance on co-option as well as the possibility that in the long run a community council might not be quorate.

PCC have set the parameters and have determined that there will be clearly defined urban and rural councils. Councils with an electorate of more than 2000 will be classed as urban and will have a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 18 councillors.

Rural councils will have a minimum of six and a maximum of 12 councillors. The minimum size of a rural council was set at 500 electors. However, those councillors below that figure will not be forced to merge with a neighbouring council but asked to consider the benefits of voluntary merger and possible start discussions with neighbouring councils.

This review would not be likely to affect Tenby in relation to the number of councillors 13 councillors. However, there may be small things, for example, are there houses in one community that identify more with another that could be brought in if the boundary changed slightly?

All initial proposals had to with the Boundary Commission by 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Their recommendations will then be sent out for consultation before going to Welsh Government. Any changes would be implemented at the 2027 town and community council elections.

If we had any strong feelings about any possible changes, we need to start thinking about it now, said the Clerk.

Cllr. Blackhall recalled that during the last review we had suggested that Park House and its surrounding properties should be considered for bringing in to Tenby as the land opposite them, from Waterwynch to Monkstone, was within Tenby's electoral boundary.

Their answer was to reduce our boundary to Waterwynch, he commented.

NALC and the Unions have finally agreed the pay award which should have come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. It is a cross-the-board increase to each SCP of £1925.00. This is to be implemented immediately and backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April.

On Saturday the Royal British Legion would be having a small service to mark 11<sup>th</sup> November at the War Memorial. If any councillor wished to join them and the Mayor please meet at 10.45am.

The Poppy Pebble service would take place at St Mary's at 11,30 am.

Sunday will be the main Remembrance Day Service. It will commence with the church service at 10am. The parade will leave St Mary's at 10.45 to go to the War Memorial for the Act of Commemoration and Wreath Laying. Councillors please be at the De Valence by 9.30 am to accompany the Mayoral Party to the church.

PCC's countywide road closures are in place for the parade. However, the Clerk was informed yesterday that there are no PCSOs available to man our parade closures as in previous years. With 5 days to go it will be highly unlikely be able to get a Traffic Management firm in place – particularly as this is a problem for all the towns.

As such he had been liaising with Mr Owen who will arrange for PCC trained TMOs to man our closed roads. However, there would be a cost implication.

Mr. Owen had also said that he will look into getting a TMO training course set up for local organisations to attend to hopefully avoid this situation in future years.

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

Resolved that the next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7pm followed by a full council meeting on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm.

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

None were proposed at this time.

**127. 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**